

# **A NEW BIRTH**

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**THE KEY TO ALL OF  
GOD'S PROVISIONS**

**ADE ESAN**

YAV PUBLICATIONS

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LUTHERVILLE-TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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## INTRODUCTION

God is the greatest giver and provider. From the foundation of the world, God knew that He was going to create a special being, man, in His own likeness; who would walk like Him, talk like Him and act like Him, and who would eventually be co-ruler of the earth with Him. In addition, he knew that this special being would need some things that did not yet exist in order to enjoy a peaceful and purposeful life, and for him to carry out God's plan on earth successfully. Therefore, God provided for all the needs of man: food, clothing, shelter, love and belonging, and security, even before He created man.

God spent five of the six days of creation providing for the needs of man. He created light for the day time, when man requires it for his activities, and darkness when man needs to rest. He created land and water animals and birds in the air, and commanded the ground to bring forth vegetation of different varieties; all of which serve as food for man. This exemplifies one of God's names: "Jehovah Jireh," which connotes that God foresaw the needs of man and met those needs even before man showed up and realized he needed such things. Eventually, on the sixth day, man showed up, and, God said to him, "Eh! I have provided for all you are ever going to need before I brought you here. I created every other creature because of you: plants, animals, water creatures, birds of the air etc are all at your disposal; to satisfy your hunger and every other need." Thus, all the while man was in the Garden of Eden, he did not lack anything; all his needs had been met.

Then, Satan arrived in the garden to deceive man. Consequently, man was led astray by Satan and he

disobeyed his creator. Immediately, the glory of God departed from him and his wife, and they realized that they were naked. Man became separated from his creator and lost everything God had just graciously given him. However, because of His love for mankind, God sought a way to restore His relationship with man, now severed by sin, and to give back to man all he had lost. The shedding of innocent blood was required. Only the blood of Jesus qualified for such an atoning sacrifice, so God gave up His only Son and sent him to die on the cross. By his blood, Jesus bridged the gap between God, his Father, and man. This restored the abundant life that man lost in the Garden of Eden. Now, for anyone to have access to this restored “goodies,” he or she must plead allegiance to the one who paid the price for the restoration by his blood, Jesus Christ. One has to confess him as Lord and believe with one’s heart that God raised him from the dead (Romans 10:9-10). In other words, one must be born again. This is the key to the abundant life, and this is what this book is about. Enjoy it.

—Ade Esan

## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to:

- ❖ All who have left homes, brothers or sisters, father or mother, children or fields because of the gospel.
- ❖ All whose lives will be impacted by reading it.



# CHAPTER ONE

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## THE KINGDOM OF WHAT?

The telephone rang and Greg picked up the receiver. “Hi! Sweetie, I am glad you called, I’ve been waiting all day.”

...

“Nothing in particular, just sitting around thinking about you.”

...

“You know that life is boring without you around, next time I’ll have to go with you.”

...

“I can’t wait honey, I’m counting minutes now.”

...

“How’s life over there?”

...

“Glad you’re having a nice time, but I’m missing you badly here.”

...

*(Suddenly Greg raised his voice)* “The kingdom of what? You are kidding me! Look, I don’t want to have anything to do with whatever kingdom you are talking

about, I don't even want to think about it. Bye." Greg slammed down the receiver and stamped out of the room.

Greg is a young man in his mid twenties, 6 foot 2 inches tall. He is handsome with a good athletic build—a basketball star in high school and later, in college. He has his degrees from one of the most prestigious universities, has an enviable job, and is approaching the pinnacle of his career. He is engaged to his high school sweetheart, Lora, and marriage preparations are underway. Both he and his fiancé are professing Christians, members of the same church. With a few months to their wedding day, a friend invited Lora to a “bride-to-be” retreat in another town, and there she had a life-transforming experience. This is what she was trying to share with Greg on the phone.

On the first evening of the retreat, there had been an expository teaching from the third chapter of the Gospel of John, with emphasis on the first three verses:

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.” In reply, Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” (NIV)

The teacher at the retreat taught that the basic foundation of Christianity is the new birth, and that this is mandatory for everybody who professes to be a Christian. As a house without foundation will eventually fall, he says, so it is for anyone professing to be a Christian who is not born again; such a person cannot go far because he or she does not have any relationship with God in the first place. The new birth is the beginning of a

real relationship with God, and anyone in the church who is not born again is merely congregating with others in the church; he or she is not truly a child of God. This second birth is what opens the doors of all of God's blessings and provisions, making them accessible to a person, the teacher concluded. At the end of his teaching, he invited all who had not experienced this new birth and who were now willing to do so to come forward. More than half of the attendees, including Lora, went forward to be led in the sinner's prayer—professing that they believe in their heart that Jesus Christ died on the cross for their sins, and confessing with their mouth that He is Lord, as stated in Paul's Letter to the Romans, chapter 10, verses 8-10:

“The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” (NIV)

Everyone was excited about the experience and thankful for the revelation, which had eluded them during the many years they have been members of local churches and yet had not heard such a teaching from their pulpits. They seized the opportunity to be born again with both hands. Heaven came down and glory filled their souls, and they could barely wait for the service to be over so they could share the good news of their experience with their loved ones.

Immediately following the meeting, Lora is among the first callers; she almost yells as she shares her new-life experience with her fiancé, Greg—that is when the telephone conversation quoted earlier took place—but to

Lora's surprise, Greg did not share her excitement. He didn't want to hear or think about the new birth or the kingdom of God and all the access to all of God's provisions that Lora tries to communicate to him. He smashes the receiver on the phone and walks angrily away. Lora is disappointed and confused. How are they going to work things out? They have been longtime friends and lovers, and they are engaged to be married. In fact, her presence at the retreat had been part of her preparation for marriage. What she had considered a wonderful experience and great news a few minutes earlier has turned out to be a nightmare. When she had picked up the phone to call Greg, she was sure he would listen to her with attention, and that he would ask her to lead him in praying the sinner's prayer. Much to her surprise, things go the opposite way when Greg ends their conversation abruptly, something he has not done in all the years they have been together. This is strange. How is she going to handle this? What can she do to make Greg understand? Can the pastor of their church, their parents, or anybody from anywhere help? Will she have to recant her new birth experience in order to maintain her relationship with Greg, or is this the beginning of the end of their relationship?

She tries to call Greg back several times, but he does not answer the phone. Why does he not answer? What is he doing on the other side: crying or cursing? Is it wise for her to stay until the end of the retreat in two days, or is it better for her to pack up and rush home as soon as possible? These and many other questions are racing through Lora's mind. *O God, help Greg so he does not do something foolish, and help me to make the right decision at this point. Please!* She kneels down to pray but ends up crying herself to sleep.

## CHAPTER TWO

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### **STILL DON'T GET IT!**

Greg has reasons to oppose Lora's new experience. Both of them had been members of the same local church all their lives. Greg even holds a leadership position among the church youth; he is a shining star among his peers, and everything is going well. All these years their pastor has never preached on the need to be born again, even though one might presume he knows the Bible says this to be true in the Book of John, chapter 3, verse 3.

"...Born again? In order to see the kingdom of God? And to have access to all of His provisions? I don't understand what she's talking about. Our pastor did not teach us that! What is wrong with Lora?" Greg says, thinking aloud. "Is she getting fanatical or what? If this passage was so important, our pastor would have preached on it."

"No," he concludes, "Lora has been indoctrinated by New Age teachers. I will not have anything to do with it. I love her with all my heart, but I will not allow her to cause me to stumble. I will not fall for New Age teachings. I'll talk to our pastor about it."

"Moreover," he continues, "there is time for

everything, a time to be born and a time to die, a time to work and a time to enjoy. This is not the right time for me to be thinking about heaven.” *What else could she mean by the kingdom of God and all His provisions? Definitely, she’s talking about heaven!* “We are about to begin our lives together as a complete man and woman. This is the time to settle down and enjoy all our years of hard work.”

Well, who can blame the young man? As far as he knows, “the kingdom of God” Lora is referring to means dying and going to heaven.

“It is not right,” he continues, deeply in thought. “It is not right for anyone to be talking about dying to a well-educated young man, who holds an executive position in a big company and who has almost reached the top of the corporate ladder. Likewise, it is not fair to be talking about death to a young woman who is only a few months away from being married to the man she loves with all her heart. Life is good and the future is long and bright, so heaven is somewhere in the far, remote future. Why talk about it now? It is cruel of that preacher or teacher or whatever he calls himself to be teaching such to young ladies who are on the verge of marriage. This is not the right time; give me a break!”

“Had I known, I would have discouraged Lora from attending that stupid retreat, I thought something good was going to come out of it, but it is the opposite. What am I supposed to do now? Start to look for another girlfriend after all these years that we have stuck to each other? Our wedding plans are now the talk of the town. Do we cancel them or what? Lord I need your help, I am confused.”

Greg buries his head in his hand and falls asleep a few minutes later.

Even though he is well educated and has been going

to church all his life, it is clear that Greg lacks knowledge of the Word of God. This deficiency has influenced his reaction to the good news Lora tried to share with him. God says His people are destroyed because of lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). All the years he has been in the church, his pastors failed woefully to preach the truth and the basic foundation of faith. Lora, on the other hand, though in the same boat as her fiancé until attending the bride-to-be retreat, has heard the truth for the first time in her life and embraces it. She received the word of truth with joy, and when the opportunity to be born again presented itself, she seized it with both hands; believing on Jesus with her heart and confessing His lordship openly with her mouth. Excited, she called Greg to share the good news, but his reaction was contrary. Rather than rejoicing with her, he rebuffs her.

Contrary to Greg's belief, when one is born again, he is translated from the kingdom of darkness (the domain of Satan) to the kingdom of light (the kingdom of God). To put it in another way, the new birth results in salvation and all the benefits that accompany it. Jesus told the highly placed, well-respected religious leader Nicodemus that in order for him to be saved he had to be born again. Knowledge, prestige, religious piety, church membership, high social status, and good works all combined cannot save anyone. The "Kingdom of God" then does not refer to "the sweet by and by" that we encounter when we die and go to heaven. Rather, it starts now. It is the abundant life that Jesus says he came to give. *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* (John 10:10, NIV).