

# Covenant University

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## **SPIRITUALITY IN ACADEMIC PURSUIT: GOD SHOWED IT TO ME**

*Louis O. Egwari*

# Public Lecture Series



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# Introduction

## **Introduction**

God servant speaking; 'the day I see this University going the way of others, I shut it down for we then have no business being in University education. This chronicles the departure philosophy of Covenant University. The vision is to make Covenant University a World Class University, not only occupying a place in the map of excellence but providing solutions to all nagging questions of life.

At inception, God commanded His servant to hand over the University to him and that underlines the spiritual context of the Covenant University Core Values; it is the arrow head and a deviation from this in any guise signifies service to two masters. Remember we can do nothing except God be with us (Psalms 127: 1). In this academic pursuit to make Covenant University a World Class University, a Zion of the end time to whom after all will seek for knowledge, total dependence on God is needed.

## **How it Started**

God took me in the Spirit and showed me Canaan Land and then Covenant University and said to me behold by my finger have I done this and by my Messenger have I established it.

Then said he to me listen to him and study his way for I have laid prosperity along his path.

I have made him a reference point for this millennium and you cannot attract the virtue he carries if you do not celebrate him and his works.

Yes I have given him unto you a Teacher (Isaiah 30: 20-21).

### **Why a Guide?**

The scriptures above say: “*And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers; and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left*”.

This is a clear warning of pending perilous times and Christian can only be spared if they heed to the words of their teachers and abide by their instructions. A teacher not only hands on information but leads by examples. I am delighted to announce to you that God has given unto us in Covenant University first, then the Winners family worldwide and third the African Nations a Teacher in His Servant Bishop (Dr.) David O. Oyedepo to guide us by His Spirit into all truth. The Bishop severally had declared, the Holy Spirit speaks to me and I hear Him clearly just as one speaks to a friend.

You cannot draw virtue from one you do not celebrate, and you cannot celebrate one you do not honour neither will you honour one you do not know. Therefore, permit me to begin to examine the personality call Dr. David Oyedepo.

## **Dr. David Oyedepo**

He has a simple credential: God's messenger sent to liberate man from all oppression of Satan especially the Black race and to prosper them and restore their dignity. And this he is doing with all passion and the testimonies are overwhelming. Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart (Psalms 119: 111).

He presides over the largest Church auditorium in the World. He is the president of the Living Faith Church International Worldwide and the Chancellor of Covenant University. He is an achiever, the 'Ekwueme' (as he says it he does it) of our time. One with whom God has covenanted with as King David of old saying: I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflicts him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercies will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him (Psalms 89: 20-28).

I am yet to see the first word that he declared that did not come to pass. He is the one God touched his tongue with the coal of fire that as he says it he sees it. Some times last year during our months of great harvest for souls he declared; the Spirit of God has blown the shells from the sea onto the sea shores, rush in and gather them. Same month the harvest of souls was unprecedented. He spoke about royal chairs and plasma TV sets for Faith Tabernacle and all adjoining worship Centres and today these are reality.

He is an author and has written over sixty titles. He is a strong advocate of the reading culture and this is exemplified by billboards advertising the importance of books in the development of the human mind. He often says books are your greatest asset, no wonder he has generously subsidized his books to encourage wide readership. Realizing the instrumentality of education in fulfilling the mandate God handed him, Covenant University came on stream and Landmark University is set to go. He calls them (the ends) from the beginning to be; for we look not at the things which are seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Corinth 4: 18). This is the spiritual dimension. Not depending on your senses but on the Word of God. For the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever (Isaiah 40: 8).

What then makes this man ticks: he hears and obeys God. He is a man with the faith of Abraham, a sacrificial faith. I call it an exceedingly great faith. I remember his admonishing word to me in Israel, faith, faith, faith; that's all it takes to please God, and by it great exploits are wrought. Finally, it is difficult to see a man that obeys God that does not love him and a man that loves God and does not honour him. Thank you Father never ceases from his mouth. He is a man to study, a book to read and a leader to follow.

## **Why Him?**

His life (spirituality) and his exploits (testimonies) are to guide us in our pursuits in life. I remember delivering a lecture on the power of acknowledgement during the hooding ceremony of the College of Business and Social Sciences in 2009 and this fits in perfectly to celebrating your mentors which our father in the Lord, Dr. David Oyedepo does not compromise. We must go back to source to draw

virtue and inspiration to forge ahead. We must study the life style and pattern of the man God has bless us with in other to prosper. He is prospering because God showed it to him. And now I am to prosper because God showed him to me. That is the essence of my lecture. And for all that care to see him and hear him prosperity is at your door step, Amen. And if Covenant University will hear him and celebrate him then you can become world class in no distance future.

### **How do We Celebrate Him?**

Another word about the man David; this will enable you appreciate what I am talking about.

He called him, He sent him and as he went He established him and made him a city that cannot be removed, a people that cannot be daunted. He called him by name David and re-enact His covenant with him and says I have made you my firstborn.

And today we behold him in glory as a man beholding himself in a mirror is transformed from glory into glory.

Obviously, such a man deserves being celebrated. The question then is how should we celebrate him?

- Celebrate his person
- Celebrate his works
- Celebrate his mandate
- Celebrate his testimonies
- Follow in his stead

How can his person be celebrated? Faculty can begin to research on the man David that books should be written out of him to guide generations to come.

About his works: the enigma called Faith Tabernacle, the spectacle of Covenant University and the City call Canaan Land. The mysteries of these are yet uncovered.

The mandate and its full essence and the driving force behind it. What is Shiloh?

His testimonies can be encapsulated in a movie or best still in a documentary.

If he is celebrating his mentors and prospering because it is an injunction, then while can't his sons celebrate him so that they may prosper. This again God showed to me, and as I have received so have I delivered.

### **Command Ye Me:**

What does this mean? Arrogate power to oneself and order God to perform to one's dictate; certainly not. God servant constantly declares God is committed to perform and grant you your heart desires if you are willing to obey and do his Will. Also know that the Holy Spirit does not win unwilling souls, only whosoever will. In same vein God does not commit an assignment to an unwilling individual. The heart must be contrite and yielding to use by the Holy Spirit. In the Book of Genesis Chapter 24 we saw how Abraham servant was guided by the Holy Spirit to get Isaac a wife. For example in verses 12-14 the servant prayed for good success concerning his assignment. He went further to ask for a sign of approval of his choice and this God granted him. But of particular emphasis is verse 12 that reads O Lord, God of my master Abraham, I pray You, cause me to meet with good success today, *and show kindness to my master Abraham* (a case of meekness and humility). The servant never spoke of himself always referring to the master that sent him. That is why, while he yet spoke the answer was delivered (verse 15; before he had finished speaking, behold, out came Rebekah, who was the daughter of Bethuel son of

Mileah, who was the wife of Nahor the brother of Abraham, with her water jar on her shoulder.

Let us look at another scriptural illustration of a contrite heart seeking for divine intervention. In Genesis 16: 7-13 the Angel of the Lord appeared to Hagar, Sarai's maid asked her to return to her mistress and be submissive to her. He also told her of things that would be as pertain to Ishmael; for the Angel of the Lord said, See now, you are with a child and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael (God hears), because the Lord has heard and paid attention to your affliction. Hagar response in verse 13 was very significant.

*So she called the name of the Lord Who spoke to her, You are a God of seeing, for she said, have I (not) even here (in the wilderness) looked upon Him Who sees me (and lived)? Or have I here also seen (the future purpose or designs of) Him Who sees me?*

Yes a contrite heart that seeks after God and obey Him even to foretell the future. This is very instructive when we consider Mary's encounter with angel Gabriel; the future was foretold (for even the barren Elizabeth was heavy with a child) for with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. She accepted the assignment and the deal was endorsed, sealed and delivered. Yes a willing heart is always used by the Holy Spirit to accomplish the Will of God.

Many years ago, a friend came to my office and in the course of our discussion said "I am very powerful now," and I said "how?" His response was I have Jesus in my pocket and no one can molest me. What do you mean that you have Jesus in your pocket? Is he that small to be contained in a trousers pocket? He laughed and brought out a handkerchief presumably a mantle and said this is it. I can do

anything with it. And I said “but you are here for a test for urinary tract infection”. He retorted, “O boy forget, this one is to deal with those area boys and police men that are always harassing us in our shops.” Yes he has the instrument of faith but was shallow in the knowledge and application of it and thinks with it he can command God to do his biddings.

I will take one graphical contemporary illustration before I leave this subject. Brother David Oyedepo (then) went on a trip to visit his friends and brethren in Christ in a near by town only to discovered that they had relocated. Having received a deep revelation that the Holy Spirit is a person, he inquired of Him to guide him to the new residence of his friends. The Holy Spirit appeared and gave a step by step description and David followed and it was a most refreshing experience when he was led to his friends by the Holy Spirit. However, at an instance when he questioned the validity of the description he was left alone to decide, but when he yielded and said “Holy Spirit which way?” The guide was sweet and according to him it has remain sweet. For whatever he asks you to do, do it (John 2: 5).

## **The Great Command**

We have often heard of 'Unity in Diversity'. This was an early political slang in Nigeria trying to foster unity of a Nation with diverse cultural and religious lineages. It was even envisioned as an instrument of strength, power and greatness. No wonder we quickly adopted the appellation the 'Giant of Africa'. But over the years the giant in us slept because the great command was missing, but now can be found in Joel 2: 1-11.

*Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand.*

*A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there halt not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.*

*A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.*

*The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in a battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.*

***They run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his way, and they shall not break their ranks.***

*Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.*

*They shall run to and fro in the city: (ie., they shall be everywhere making their marks, dominating all spheres of human endeavours) they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the house; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief (breaking barriers).*

*The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining (Dominion, great command bringing all to submission).*

*And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army; for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word; for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?*

- as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there halt not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations – **This is a prophesy and “whosoever” can be this great army of the LORD (Is Covenant University willing to be the Whosoever).**
- They run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his way, and they shall not break their ranks – **This is the characteristics of this great army. Each excelling in his field without interference, however, with the entire team having one purpose and one mission.**
- Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded – **This speaks of love; no envy, no bitterness. Moreover they are under divine immunity, for they shall not be wounded.**
- Look at the next verse; they shall run to and fro in the city . . . . they shall enter in at the windows . . . **talks of great exploits nothing withholding them, because they are the army of the LORD strong and mighty.**

### **The Mystery of the Fig Tree**

*And as they passed along the way they saw a fig tree full of leaves without a sign of fruit. And Jesus spoke unto the tree, he said, you useless cumberer of the ground, you fig tree fair to look upon, but a delusive thing. You take from earth and air the food that fruitful trees should have. Go back to earth and be yourself the food for other trees to eat (Mark 11: 12-13 recaptioned).*

“Go back to earth and be yourself the food for other trees to eat”. This is a rather strong pronouncement. The unfruitful fig is a tree and was commanded to become food for fruitful trees; and so shall it be for those who bear no fruit. Remember we are described as trees of righteousness (Isaiah 61:3) and we are to show forth our light which means to bear fruits of righteousness. We are to reject the portion of the cursed fig tree.

In order not to suffer the fate of the fig tree, it is important to consider the life of the fig. The fig was boisterous, full of charm and attractions. These were exemplified by its plenteous, green and luxuriant leaves. This was responsible for why Jesus and his disciples approached it. And they did in anticipation to find fruits commensurate with its size and beauty. The fig was laud in all its lifestyle and will not go unnoticed. This may be assumed a good attribute. Certainly but it has the two sides of a coin. It will attract attention, but what you do with the attention determines whether you come out a success or a failure.

Attention places demand on you, if you deliver, the result is gain and if you don't, the consequence is reproach. The fact that the fig tree was unfruitful implies a false and deceitful lifestyle. It is an impostor assuming to be what it is not. It adorns itself with the aura of an achiever. Many people fall into this group. They will invest all they have to look good, they will attend all the social functions in their locality and talk big, often, they make an exist before any demand is placed on them. They will borrow simply to maintain a social class. They are self-centered, always ready to take but never willing to give. Their life is all about me-and-for-me.

Cumberers are surface feeders, scavengers, put more implicitly devourers. They have many tiny fibrous roots and rootlets and can traverse large expanse of top soil obtaining nutrients. Of what use is this characteristic if the nutrient obtained cannot be put into

fruitful use. Remember here that the greatest virtue in life is to help others, and to whom much is given much is expected. So if you have been equipped like the fig tree to be fruitful, greater measure of returns is expected of you. You are to be a blessing to others by the measure of virtue deposited in you. **For God can do nothing more for men than they would do for other men.** Pause for a minute and consider the above statement. Was it not possible for Jesus to make food available for the twelve and himself? After all, he turned water to wine and fed five thousand men. True, but he was not to be with them for a much longer time. He is saying to the disciples, surely, I fed the five thousand people because I have the capacity to do so, this same capacity is given you that you may feed men after the order I did, not necessarily by conjuring food from heaven but by being resourceful. Much has been given you and you must prove by your fruits that you have been with me, else the world that looks up to you for succour will condemn and kill you. You remember Jesus charge on Peter when he commissioned him as the head of the Church on earth – feed my sheep – that when I return I shall see in you fruits worthy of the virtues I have bestowed in you. We all have this measure of virtue or talent in us and we are to make profitable use of them so that our reward will be well done you good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things (Matthew 25: 21, 23).

Ask yourself this simple question. Why was I born? Where you born to occupy space, to fill void? The earth surface is becoming smaller with increase in human population and activities. The quest for habitable land is reaching frightening dimension. So if you don't occupy, sustain and improve the land you will be asked to quit. One of the conditions for ownership of land is that you must develop it within a specified time; else your ownership of the land is revoked. You are not a spectator on earth neither are you a fancy object for amusement. You have a reason for being here. You have

to discover that reason and you have to invest every dime to attain.

Life is not show but show business. The unfruitful fig was showing off, playing to the gallery, delusive in cheers and encomium. Observe that the fig tree in the context was not without talent. In fact it was multi-talented. It has the ability to take, that is, it is tactful in character. Because it is out going, it has contacts and knows places. In short, the fig is a good contact man. Look at the qualities describing it – cumbrer of the ground, that is, knows where the resources are located -, take from earth and air the food that fruitful trees should have, that is, an interloper. So where lays the problem. The fig is a cheat, a waster and selfish.

There is no place in this world for unproductive people, but everyone is given the opportunity to excel. A measure of that ability has been deposited in you. Use it. In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14-30), the servants with five and two talents produced 100% increase and received the same commendation from their master. What happened to the servant who did not invest his talent; the only talent was taken away from him and given to the servant with five talents. There are several ways you can lose your talent. An organ not used depreciates in function; that was why Apostle Paul admonishes us to discipline our body and bring it into subjection by training so that it does not become unfit. In time of lack, the unproductive servant quickly trade off his talent for a morsel of pottage and there after is left with nothing. Unproductivity and weakness go together, that is the reason why unproductive people are conquered in time of aggression. You will notice that the fig tree did not wither immediately Jesus spoke to it. It took some time. Why? First the source was removed, so supply was cut-off, but the fig was sustained with what it had already acquired, but as soon as that ran out the effect of the short circuited supply was manifested.

The world is a banquet and we are all called into it. Though admission to the banquet is free, to get a seat and part-take in the feast there are criteria that should be met. Failure to meet with these expectations may spell doom. The fig tree was expected to bear fruits but when none was found on it, the consequence was punishment. And it was a hard one. Why this capital punishment? The fig was endowed with all it takes to be fruitful and to contribute to life, but it squandered its virtue in self aggrandizement. It came to occupy space and attract attention when it has nothing to offer. Everybody that came around it got disappointed. In the story of the wedding feast (Matthew 22: 8-14) we were told that on the order of the king, the servants went to the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. The question is did they all part-took in the feast? Now see what happened next. The king came in to see the guest, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And he said unto him, Friend, how come thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This he said to emphasize the saying; for many are called, but few are chosen.

Let us look at the scenario. Everyone that was invited to the feast must have been given an invitation card containing instructions on conduct, dress code and expectations at the feast. All you need was to study the brochure attached to the invitation card and comply with the instructions. Evidently, the defaulter had an invitation with which he gained access into the banquet hall but did not collect anything from the store house the wedding garment before entering the banquet hall. The only explanation is that he did not study the brochure enclosed and that explains why he was

speechless when confronted by the king. He was duly invited and that was the reason the king called him Friend denoting recognition. The wedding garment connotes “Talent” and for the man to enter the banquet without his talent was a taboo. The question is what he was doing there. Without his talent he has nothing to contribute, he is a waste just like the fig tree.

### **A Little Science**

How does all this fit in, considering I am a Scientist? The people I send you to, are they all scientists and the scientists how much of My desires have they accomplished? Notwithstanding, I will guide you in the way of their thoughts and My counsel shall come to pass.

Isaiah 55: 10 reads: “For as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens, and return not there again, but water the earth and make it bring forth and sprout, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater.”

This is the interplay of science. Factors of production are made available to all. Indeed the requirements for seed germination are naturally endowed on earth. That is why the earth brought forth; however, there was a separation; some multiplied their portion by investment, these are those that sowed their seed why the other categories were consumers, those that ate up their seed as bread. By the law of natural justice, the bread eaters are always dependent on the seed breeders. Now the time is come when the bread eater is asked to buy without money, because money has failed; yet payment has to be made (See Isaiah 55: 1). So if money is not accepted as a means of transaction, obviously, there will be other means – your liberty. This is the entanglement of the black race (Africa), a people that consumes virtually every thing from the West or East and is themselves none producers. They have therefore moved from one level of slavery to higher levels of

slavery that today her politics, economy, education, resource endowment and culture are under the control of Europe, America and other emerging world powers. The most recent which I will address shortly, is food enslavement.

Famine stares us in the face; it has been predicted to be a global crisis and Africa will be most hit. Science thinks biotechnology is the way out and man in the last three decades has engaged in a mad rush to mass produce food to feed the ever growing world population. However there is a twist in all this. While there may be mass food production, the quality, dietary component and health implication of the genetically bred food need to be ascertained. Eggs are more of chaff with 95% reduction in shelf life and many seed bearing fruits are genetically engineered to become seedless or less seed bearing hybrids. Cultivars are now produced from parts other than seeds. This contravenes God's creation in Genesis 1:11; let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. In Genesis 1: 29 God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

What does biotechnology do? First it shortens the gestation period, that is, reduces the reproductive cycle and by implication the life span of the organism. If it is true that we are what we eat, by implication man is defining its life expectancy. Immunology teaches that the extremes of life are more vulnerable to disease; on the one hand as a result of developing immune status and on the other extreme depreciating immunity associated with procreation and the rigours of life. **Therefore, if our system is built up by immature and disease vulnerable diets, one can speculate that the increase global threat of human disease is associated with this desecration of God's intent.** Also notice that at the same time

the pharmaceutical industries have grown in leaps and bounds and medical practices have become more sophisticated. Yet instead of eradication of diseases we hear of emerging and reemerging infectious agents. Cancerous tissues and all forms of pathological anomalies are reported daily. **Therefore, it is not biotechnology it is Godnology (receiving divine instruction and inspiration from God on the way out).**

At this point I know many are wondering: he should be talking in favour of biotechnology; that happens to be his domain. But realize that it is not the process that I question, it is the intent. That takes me to examine another crucial subject; the intent of seedless hybrids or sterile stocks. Seedless fruits and sterile livestock are produced for food only. They cannot be propagated just as bread cannot be propagated. They ate manna (bread) in the wilderness and died but I give you the Bread of Life (seed) that if any man eats of me he shall not die but live forever (John 6: 48-51). The man with the seed is master over the man that seeks after bread. Today developed Nations mass produced hybrid seeds for export to Africa which on cultivation yield seedless fruits or fruits with fewer seeds. These are deliberate acts to make you perpetually dependent on them, for you will continually return to the waters to quench your thirst unless you dig your own well. This is technological enslavement and the call is for Africa to wake up and take its destiny in its hand.

Technological investment is colossal. We must move away and rapidly from the acquisition of teaching equipment and facilities to acquisition of research based equipment and facilities. We must invest heavily and commit all resources; material and human to develop our technology. It may be slow but with commitment and dependence in God it is possible; for those that have made breakthroughs God showed it to them, and now that we are crying out to Him we will see it.

Now who is Alexander Fleming? He is the one that discovered the antibiotic Penicillin. The discovery was said to be accidental. The question is was that the first time a culture plate of staphylococci was contaminated with the mould *Penicillium*; obviously not?

The story is that Isaac Newton came about the laws of gravity when an apple fell and hit him under the apple tree. Did he get the revelation simply because the apple fell on him or was he the only person that has witness a fruit fall downward; obviously not?

The man that discovered PCR 1993 Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry, Kary Mullis was said to have gone car cruising one night along the Pacific Coast Highway when he was inspired to describe the repeated cycle of DNA amplification. Many other scientists in the field could have gone car cruising also along the Pacific but he alone got the revelation.

Apostle Paul on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christian had an encounter with the LORD Jesus, and according to his account, he said we all saw the light, but I alone heard the voice.

What then did these say to us? Those with the breakthroughs were spiritually alert and sensitive and received the vibes when it came. I remember the Bishop addressing us on our trip to Israel to under study their success in agriculture stressing “*see what others will not see, hear what others will not hear and discover that which is hidden and come back and apply same.*”

### **Growing a Centre of Excellence in Biotechnology:**

The Department of Biological Sciences hosted the First International Biotechnology Symposium IBS'09 in March 2009 and there was great enthusiasm for continuation and improvement

following its success. Consequent to this, IBS is made an Annual Event and IBS 2010 with **Theme: Biotechnology: Local Approach to Global Relevance** comes up 23-25, March 2010 and will begin to address the importance of Biotechnology in Agriculture. As a policy trust the Department of Biological Sciences is to focus its Biotechnology research in the field of agriculture. This informed the sub-themes which include **Biotechnology and Food Security; Biotechnology and Indigenous Knowledge; Biotechnology and Engineering; Biotechnology and Social Economics; Biotechnology and the Attendant Legal Issues**. This is in realization of the dire need to secure food for Nigerians first and then Africa. Secondly and closely knitted to the first is to establish a strong Biotechnology base for Landmark University which is coming on stream this year. It is important to state that from IBS'09 to date the University has made concerted efforts in the area of capacity building as many staff and faculty have attended training workshops in Biotechnology and are well equipped to put these acquired skills to practice.

Another fall out of IBS'09 is the proposed Triennial Biotechnology Fare and Exhibition (TBFE) aimed at showcasing strides in this endeavour. Because we do not want to talk without doing the talk, I have set up a Pawpaw Farm that will serve dual functions: One as a commercial farm and second as a research/demonstration farm. Consultations are on with the various directorates in the University where these functions are domicile. Moreover, I am drafting a proposal to build a research group of practicing Biotechnologist around this project. The group study will not be limited to Pawpaw, but Pawpaw will be the first pilot scheme and when we have got it right, then we can apply the methodology to other plants. The group work will comprise studies on hybrids and pure strains/varieties, identification and strain selection, strain improvement and adaptation to local environment, pest control,

disease resistance and post-harvest storage.

Because we must match words with actions I have designed research studies around Pawpaw and the Farm community for undergraduate students. Faculty members are showing interest and shortly, they will be co-opted as members of the Research group. The global talk is on green economy with the aim to sustain the environment and curb the foreseeable extinction of many species of plants and animals. Such sustainable drive lies with the Natural Sciences. Conservation and rehabilitation of the ecosystem therefore must be taken with all seriousness. Our first step in this direction is our identification with the Nigerian Tree Planters Association. The First Annual Conference of the NTPA to draft a constitution and seek legislative support comes up 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2010 at Ijebu Ode and Covenant University has been invited to participate. This is one of the pathways the University must follow in identifying itself within both National and global settings. The Department of Biological Sciences is putting up a proposal to harness the gains of these developments so that we are main stream players and not spectators. The proposal is on the building of a **Research and Resort Park**. This is being worked on and shortly the details will be rolled out.

*No matter the zeal, no matter the passion the level of success and the speed of attaining Biotechnological strength for Covenant University will depend on availability of resources. A Pawpaw Farm is in place, it must be well secured by fencing and screening to ward off human intruders, pests and birds. As a first line of action, screens and glass houses must naturally be in place. Cold rooms and herbarium are of necessity while proactive steps to create a botanical/zoological garden become imperative.*

The Department of Biological Sciences has compiled a comprehensive list of biotechnological materials and it is

expectant that this effort will receive the blessing of the University Management and the Board of Regents. The First Triennial Biotechnology Fair and Exhibition is in 2012. If we start now the breakthroughs expected in this field will be a reality in no distant time.

### **May I introduce myself?**

In closing permit me to say this of myself. My credential is simple. I am a son of the prophet. He came to a bush and made it a city to behold; I found a pawpaw seedling and made it a plantation. My father works always and so do I. Now I am on an Eagle's flight learning under the Master's feet. Jesus said the works I do are the works I see my Father do; for as the Father has sent me do I. That is why I said I am on an Eagle's flight learning under the Master's feet; and to God is the glory, Amen.

### **Conclusion**

From scriptures, men of great exploits were men that did the extraordinary. In closing let us examine a number of them and one amongst us:

History told us that Abraham sacrificed his son Isaac and God covenanted with him and he became the father of Nations.

History told us that in the time of famine Isaac dug wells against oppositions to irrigate his farm land and feed his stocks and God blessed the works of his hands so much that the Philistines envied him.

History told us that Solomon gave 1000 fating of bulls as offerings to the LORD and the LORD visited him with wisdom and riches

that kings and queens entreated his favour.

History has it that Jesus gave his life as a sacrificial offering for the redemption of man and God called Him my LORD and made Him Christ our LORD and God.

Paul the Apostle hearkened to the voice of the LORD to go and spread the gospel to the Gentiles and God visited him with so much unusual unction and grace that the people testified the gods have come back to us in the form of man.

Brother David hearken to the voice of the LORD and accepted the Mandate of liberation of mankind from the oppression of the devil and God visited him and said, “as you say it you see it for all power has been given you that whatever you decree on Earth is decreed in Heaven.” And today we all call him Papa our beloved Bishop and Chancellor.

What will we then say of you; Jesus I know, Paul I know, who are you?

In Covenant University a Billboard of great legend, is erected; Nelson Mandela, David Oyedepo, Barack Obama and who Next? Are you next? Then set out to do the extraordinary.

Let him that has understanding interpret what the Spirit is saying; suffice as I leave you with this expression of mine 'Nothing is Barren'

***“Nothing is Barren”***

Give me an expression and I shall live  
Speak of my existence when I am not yet visible  
Confess my presence, body soul and spirit  
Make them believe that I am alive and well

Ask them to look and look with the eye of faith and they shall see me

Proclaim my existence with obsession

Feed it into their hearts

For when it is in their hearts

They shall see me with their eyes

So Africa there is hope but we must rise up and take our destiny in our hands. With God all things are possible.

### **Acknowledgements**

My deep love and thanks go to my heavenly Father who by His beloved Son my LORD Jesus Christ has drawn me and household to himself and bestowed on us fullness of joy, peace, divine health and eternal prosperity.

I celebrate my Father in the LORD and my mentor the Chancellor of Covenant University Dr. David O. Oyedepo. Papa in many ways you have reached out to me and I remember vividly during my interview session to Covenant University I said Dr. David Oyedepo is my mentor because by him I understood what faith is and what it means to believe in oneself and giving expression to your work. That inspired me to write nothing is barren. This was re-enacted when you spoke to me in Israel and the first three words were Faith, Faith and Faith. Thank you Papa, I love you.

Yes, in 2006 during the Business Men's Convention, I put up an exhibition of research products at the Youth Chapel and when Mama Pastor Faith Oyedepo came with her daughter and inquired what they were, she thereafter laid her hands on them and blessed the products and said they would prosper. The crayfish media and the fermented rice products were the products you spoke life into

and today these products and another have been certified patentable by the National Office of Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP). Thank you for your blessing of that day is still speaking.

It takes a good coach to discover a good player and when he finds one is inspired to do exploit. That is you Professor Aize Obayan Vice-Chancellor, Covenant University. The push, the drive and the support you gave was the fuel behind many of the success stories since I came to Covenant University.

I have many people to say thank you to; permit me to lump some of them for space and time. I appreciate you Pastor Yemi Nathaniel, Pastor Engr. Beecroft, Prof. Charles Ogbulogo, Dr. Daniel Rotimi, Prof. James Katende, Prof. Mathew Ola-Rotimi Ajayi, Prof. Kehinde Okonjo, Prof. Churchill Ako Dr. C. K. Ayo and Senate Covenant University for your many forms of support.

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To my sweet love and big mummy Ejiro and son Michael you are

two wonderful people in my life. I love you dearly and we shall not be few as David and Joy join us this year 2010 our year of Restoration in Jesus precious name, Amen.

Thank you and God bless you, Amen.



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