

PRAY, PROPHECY &
PROCLAIM GOD'S
PROMISES OVER
YOUR PRODIGAL

**SNEAK
PEEK**

SAMPLE ONLY

COME HOME

TIM SHEETS &
RACHEL SHAFER



ENDORSEMENTS

Tim and his daughter, Rachel, could not have written a more timely message for those praying for prodigals. There is heavenly wisdom in these pages, coupled with faith-filled intercession that will in no doubt allow you to trust and rest in the promises of God. I couldn't help but rejoice already—for the prodigals who will be coming home.

Kathy Troccoli

Singer, Songwriter, Author

As I was reading over the chapter titles of this new book by Tim Sheets and his daughter, Rachel, I felt that this book will impact the hearts of people in a powerful way. The points in each chapter that are being brought out will help guide us to have a more powerful, positive focus that will help establish a confidence that the prodigals are coming home. Each chapter sends out a powerful message of finding identity and hope that unlocks destiny for those who are lost. The point of restored purpose truly ignites our understanding that there is more for each of us and helps lay a foundation that reveals what we have in our relationship with the Father and others. I encourage you to be ready to see the restoration of our loved ones as we see the prodigals coming into their original intended purpose and identity. The prayers and decrees in this book will help set a focus and foundation to stand on to see those who are lost come home and find their identity in Him. This book also gives great insight and strategy in how to stand in, and on, the promises of the Lord and see the prodigals come home and find their God-given destiny.

Pat McManus

Kingdom Impact Center Aurora

It is my absolute honor to endorse this amazing book, *Come Home*, written by my friends, Apostle Tim Sheets and his daughter, Rachel Shafer. This book is a strategic manual that gives the body of Christ much-needed clarity concerning the power of prayer and decrees. Within these pages are testimonies, decrees, and insights that will encourage and assist believers to work together with the Lord in prayer as He brings about the fulfillment of His prophetic promise of reaping the “billion soul harvest.” This book is a call to the wall of intercession, and it’s a valuable resource of information that will help equip each reader with a greater understanding and resolve to unrelentingly stand on that wall and refuse to back down until we see the prodigals come home! Thank you, Apostle Tim and Rachel, for your diligence in prayer and research and for your commitment and willingness to write this very insightful and timely book.

Gina Gholston

*Author of *Awakening the Church to Awaken a Nation*, *Dreams of Awakening*, and *Carry On**

Within the pages of this book by Pastor Tim and Rachel lies the current heartbeat of our Father God—He wants His family back. This is Heaven’s revelation in real time about Christ and His church releasing power into broken lives, to recover past seasons and restore the prodigal to whom they were originally intended to be. *Come Home* is a call to the church to come back to the center of the Gospel. Yet not in an introverted revivalism, but a true partnering with Heaven, decreeing His Word to see a massive harvest of souls come home.

Reverend Jen Tringale

Author, Speaker, and Podcast Host

In a world where hearts ache and spirits yearn for the return of their prodigals, *Come Home* emerges as a beacon of hope and a source of spiritual sustenance. This remarkable book, birthed from a divine calling and nurtured with fervent prayers, delivers a message of unwavering faith and profound insight. In these pages, authors Tim Sheets and Rachel Shafer usher us into a realm of understanding, empowerment, and transformative grace. With a compassionate touch, they explore the journey of prodigals, shedding light on the profound role they are destined to play in the forthcoming billion-soul harvest. Through their teachings, they unveil the power of decrees, a spiritual practice that has the potential to shift destinies and transform lives. As you embark on the journey through *Come Home*, prepare to be inspired, equipped, and uplifted. Whether you're new to the practice of decreeing or a seasoned intercessor, this book offers something invaluable—a road map to guiding prodigals back into the loving embrace of their heavenly Father.

In a world where uncertainty can cast shadows over our faith, *Come Home* shines as a radiant source of light, guiding us all toward the promise of restoration and redemption. *Come Home* is not just a book, it's a companion for the journey of faith, a source of encouragement in times of doubt, and a beacon of hope for all those who believe in the power of prayer and the unwavering love of a heavenly Father. Endorse this book with your heart, and let its wisdom resonate within you. *Come Home* will undoubtedly become a cherished guide on your path to seeing the fulfillment of God's promises in the lives of those you hold dear.

Dr. Scott Reece

River City Church, Quad Cities

This book is a Kingdom book, a much-needed Kingdom book. My friends Tim Sheets and his daughter Rachel Shafer's new

masterful work, *Come Home*, will revolutionize how you think, speak, pray, decree, and live regarding your prodigal. Tim and Rachel are gifted authors and teachers of the Word of God. Their writing style demonstrates their passionate teaching style in every book they've written together. After reading *Come Home*, you will agree that the revelation and empowerment held within these pages have the potential to wreck your life (for the good), redeem your lost loved ones, and position them to live where they were created to live, in His presence! *Come Home* should be on the bookshelf of everyone with a lost son or daughter. Among other things, this powerful new book is a road map for retrieving, empowering, and releasing this present-day prodigal generation into their purpose. You will learn of our partnership with angels and what role we play together in this process of bringing in the Great Harvest. Thank you, Tim and Rachel, for writing this book. There will be many testimonies of redemption and restoration from this work. Acts 16:31-32 says: "*They answered, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and all your family.' Then they prophesied the word of the Lord over him and all his family.*"

Dr. Greg Hood, ThD

President, Kingdom University

Apostolic Leader, The Network of Five-Fold Ministers and Churches, and Kingdom Life Ekklesia, Franklin, Tennessee

Author of *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, *Sonship According to the Kingdom*, *Citizenship According to the Kingdom*, and *Rebuilding the Broken Altar—Awaking Out of Chaos*

www.GregHood.org

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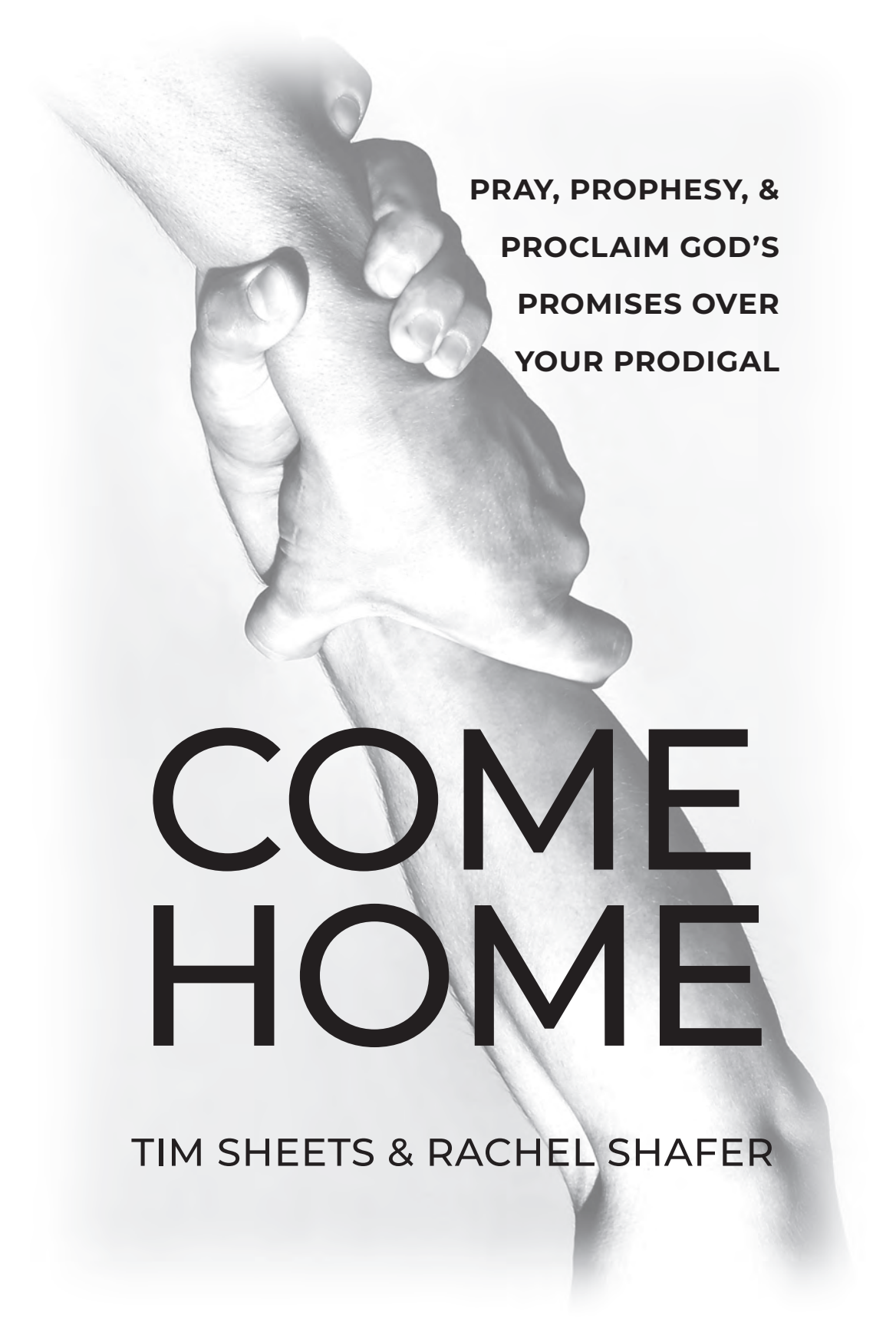
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**PRAY, PROPHECY, &
PROCLAIM GOD'S
PROMISES OVER
YOUR PRODIGAL**

COME HOME

TIM SHEETS & RACHEL SHAFER

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DEDICATION

We dedicate this book to all those who are praying or have prayed for a prodigal to come home. God sees. He knows their names. Thank you for never giving up and we are believing with you for an amazing harvest of prodigals, including yours.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you Destiny Image and Larry Sparks for your belief and support of what we do. We are blessed to have the relationship we have with you and appreciate your encouragement and input.

We acknowledge those who have paved the way, gone before us, prayed us on, and encouraged us.

Our amazing book team—Katelyn Cundiff, Marie Fox, and Carol Sheets—for the multiplied hours of helping the vision of this book become reality, we thank you. Words are not enough but we pray you know how valued you are to the process.

To each one of you, both in person and online, we appreciate you so very much for all the prayers and encouragement and your faithfulness to the assignments God gives us to implement. We couldn't do it without you, nor would we want to. Thank you.

Most importantly, we thank our Father. He invites us all to *Come Home*.

Thus says the Lord, "Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work [raising of your children, prayer] will be rewarded," says the Lord; "and your children will return from the enemy's land. There is [confident] hope for your future," says the Lord; "Your children will come back to their own country."

—JEREMIAH 31:16-17 AMP

CONTENTS

	Foreword by Larry Sparks	17
	Preface.....	19
	Introduction	21
1	Restoring Lost Purpose	25
2	Angels of Evangelism	47
3	Hope Sings.....	59
4	I Will Save Your Children	77
5	Come Home	93
6	The God Hug.....	107
7	Cast Your Cares	125
8	I Am Remembering You.....	147
	About the Authors	164

FOREWORD

Apostle Tim Sheets and his daughter, Rachel Shafer, have provided an absolutely essential go-to-guide for praying your prodigal child back home. I write these words from a unique perspective; I was interviewing Apostle Tim about one topic and our conversation took a strange turn.

We were talking about angel armies and revival, but there was such a sovereign grace and strong anointing as he began to share about God's heart for prodigals coming home and that in this new era of revival, we would witness an unprecedented turnaround when it comes to lost family members—*especially sons and daughters*—being supernaturally awakened to return to their first love.

Coupled with the engaging writing, revelation, and amazing mother's heart of Tim's daughter, Rachel, this book is unlike anything I've seen. It has powerful prayers and decrees that equip you to storm Heaven for your lost children. It has a strong, encouraging prophetic perspective that gives you the big picture of *why* God is emphasizing this supernatural *prodigal-come-home* campaign. And it links your child coming back to Jesus to their

COME HOME

identity, purpose, and assignment being fulfilled in the great reformation that is here and now.

Your son and daughter was saved by the blood of Jesus, not to simply sit in a pew, but to be a reformer who overthrows the powers of darkness in culture. Hell trembles at what this book is going to unleash into the world—the flash floods of Heaven being released by prodigals that were prayed back home!

Larry Sparks, MDiv

Publisher, Destiny Image

Author of *Pentecostal Fire* and *The Fire That Never Sleeps*

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PREFACE

It has been prophesied that a “billion soul harvest” is coming. It is our belief that prodigals will be included in that number, and within them are destinies that will be stirred up and released, with lives being changed because of their return to the Father’s House.

One often thinks of a prodigal as a son or daughter, but perhaps your prodigal is a spouse, a relative or friend. Anyone who has walked away from what they know to be spiritually true can be considered a prodigal. In the parable of the prodigal son in the Bible, the man’s son recklessly and wastefully spends his inheritance. In our current time, we think of this as someone choosing a worldly lifestyle, indulging in every desire and wasting their purpose and destiny. In the context of the parable, the prodigal son also means someone who is a sinner, one who is spiritually lost, and someone who has returned to family and faith after an absence.

An incredible aspect of this parable is the extravagant, lavish grace given by a father to his returning son. We can know and understand from this story, the power of the great love God has for all and how He longs to welcome them home.

COME HOME

Recently, God has emphasized to us His heart for the coming generation. We have wept over them, prayed over them, fasted for them. It has seemed urgent to us in our spirit that the time is now. These have been encouraging words as so many have been praying for the return of their loved ones to His embrace. Some have been captured and captivated by the current culture, trapped by the forever loser into lives they were never meant to live. Families have been contending for loved ones to return to Him. Sometimes in the midst of the battle, the war, hearts and hope become disillusioned and despair tries to overwhelm our faith. *We must not lose heart.*

Our prayer is that within the pages of this book you will find resources and ministry to help you continue to stand. We have included messages, decrees, and prayers, and we join our faith with yours to call your prodigal home. There are words within these pages that will build you up as well. We do not lose heart, we stand strong. We have angel armies' assistance and even when we can't see it, He's working.

Be encouraged.

But God!

Tim Sheets and Rachel Shafer

INTRODUCTION

Our prayer for this book is to equip the reader to boldly make a stand for the prodigals who may be in your lives, whether a relative, friend, acquaintance, or someone God lays upon your heart. We know that prodigals will be a huge part of awakening and reformation and that His desire is to bring them home and restore to them their purpose.

Upon these pages you will find God's Word, Prophetic Words, Decrees, Prayers, Testimonies, Teaching, and more to strengthen you, encourage you, and assure you that He will save your children. You will understand how to activate angel armies to assist in bringing your prodigal home. You can expect a refreshed anointing to press in and press on as you take back what the enemy has tried to steal. We have God's promise.

HOW (AND WHY) TO DECREE

It is important for us to understand decrees: what they are, why we use them, and how to apply them as part of our prayer assignments. At the end of each chapter in this book, we have

COME HOME

suggested decrees for you, and so we are providing the following information, copied in part from my book, *Planting the Heavens—Releasing the Authority of the Kingdom Through Your Words, Prayers, and Declarations*. If you would like to know more about making decrees, you can order the book at TimSheets.org.

Decrees are word seeds. Psalm 103:20 says that angels hear-ken to the voice of God’s Word. The words we speak give angels something to work with, and it is important to understand just how powerful our words are.

Job 22:28 (KJV) says, “*Thou shalt also **decree** a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.*” The NKJV says it this way, “*You will also **declare** a thing, and it will be established....*” This is why you will hear *decree* and *declare* interchanged a lot.

DECREE MEANS

When we decree, we are simply stating our prayer for a situation or person by saying emphatically what we are believing for that lines up with God’s Word. We are, in essence, planting the heavens, seeding the atmosphere with His Word and our faith.

Isaiah 51:16 (NKJV) says, “*And I have put My words in your mouth; I have covered you with the shadow of My hand, that I may plant the heavens, lay the foundations of the earth, and say to Zion, ‘You are My people.’*”

This verse emphasizes that words are seeds—word seed decrees. This also includes prayer because prayers are words of communication seeded into the heavens and into the earth. Prayer is speech to God making a request, but it is also, at times,

INTRODUCTION

a decree of God's promises. Prayers express confidence in God's answering abilities, or they may ask for divine intervention into a situation.

The mouth (*peh*) is the opening of the body to sound forth God's words as seeds that grow to fullness until they are manifested in the heavens or in the earth (Strong's 6310). Our enemy, the forever loser, wants us to keep our mouths closed and is always seeking to silence Christ's body. But from the very beginning, God's original intent was for His sons and daughters to open their mouths and declare His words. He has put His Word in your mouth so that you will decree it and He can plant it into the atmosphere. The word *plant* is the Hebrew word *nata*, which means to plant, to fix, or to set in place (Strong's 5193). God Himself was the original Gardener, and we have inherited that job from Him as His heirs.

We have to understand the power in our decrees of God's Word. We have this promise: when we stand in faith and decree what God says, when we refuse to back off, when we refuse to abandon that word seed, when we water the seed with our faith, our prayers, our praise, our confession, and our steadfast trust, the seed will produce after its kind.

Never give up on a seed you plant. Never give up on God's Word. Never. Don't negate it. We are supposed to make decrees that break loose hell's grip. We should expect God's word seeds that we decree to produce after their kind, the word of promise to come to pass, no matter what it is, and the word seeds we sow to become fruitful and multiply.

I hope this helps give some understanding as to why we decree. I encourage you to be bold and speak the decrees in this book, and add your own, out loud and with confidence, knowing

COME HOME

God backs His Word and it does not return void. Give the angels something to work with!



1

RESTORING LOST PURPOSE

Thus says the Lord: "Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work [raising of your children, prayer] will be rewarded," says the Lord; "and your children will return from the enemy's land. There is [confident] hope for your future," says the Lord; "Your children will come back to their own country" (Jeremiah 31:16-17 AMP).

Many are standing on God's Word and His promises regarding the return of prodigals, whether it be their own child or loved one, a friend, or those contending for a wave of revival that includes the lost returning home. In the study and preparation for this book, we came across a powerful truth regarding the biblical illustration of the Prodigal Son story. This word prepares the foundation regarding what we have thought was lost purpose, but God's plan always contains redemption, as the following paragraphs illustrate.

Luke 15:20 (NKJV) says, concerning the prodigal son, *"...when he was still a great way off, his father...had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him."*

Jewish history enlightens us as to why the father ran, and it is a stunning revelation. This man's son had demanded his inheritance, wanting what he considered to be his now, rather than when his father died, as was the custom of the day. After receiving his portion, the son left his home, turning his back on the values he had been taught. He eventually lost everything, wasting it all on parties and prostitutes, and ended up working in a pigpen. The son broke his father's heart, as well as breaking all the rules of the tight-knit community he had been brought up

COME HOME

in. After he came to his senses, the son decided to return home. Luke 15:20 tells us his father saw his son when he was still a long way off and ran to him.

In those times, a Middle Eastern man never ran, because in order to do so he would have to raise up his tunic so he wouldn't trip, and in so doing would expose his bare legs. In that culture, it was considered humiliating and shameful for a man to show his bare legs. In addition, it was known that if a Jewish son lost his inheritance among Gentiles, and then returned home, the community would perform a ceremony called the *kezazah*, or a "ceremony of shame."

During this ceremony, they would break a large pot or pitcher in front of the son. As they smashed it into pieces, they would declare him to be cut off from his people, all ties broken, and he would no longer be welcome in the community.

This, then, brings us to the question: why did the father run to his son, which also brought a level of shame to himself? In essence, the father was running to get to his son in order to extend grace before anyone else could get to him with the law. He wanted to extend love, acceptance, welcome, and hope before anyone else could take it away. He wanted his son welcomed, not shamed with humiliation and rejection.

As onlookers watched the father run toward his son, reuniting, hugging and kissing him, it would be apparent there would be no *kezazah*. Instead, there would be a homecoming party, a celebration of his restoration, which only the father could bring. No rejection—his father bore the shame and showed everyone that his son was welcomed home.

The application for us is fairly obvious. Our Father bore our sin and shame through Jesus. We can be forgiven and redeemed,

and even our lost purpose and destiny can be restored. As we repent, He wipes the slate clean and gives us a fresh start.

God's Promise: What He did for the prodigal son, He will do for you, and He will also do it for those for whom you are praying. Lost purpose will be recovered.

PURPOSE

The apostle Paul was a man of great purpose who understood destiny. In 2 Timothy, he wrote to his son in the faith, Timothy, concerning the subject.

For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus.

(2 Timothy 1:9 NLT)

Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

(2 Timothy 1:9 NKJV)

The word *purpose* is the Greek word *prothesis* (Strong's 4286).¹ *Pro* is before. *Prothesis* means to set before, to set up, an exposition, and it also means to resolve or design.

You can easily recognize two English words derived from *prothesis*. First of all is the word *thesis*, which is a written report. An English teacher may have asked you to write a thesis on a

COME HOME

particular subject or topic in school. *Thesis* can also refer to an essay or written composition concerning a specific viewpoint. In some situations, it could refer to a book.

Paul said to Timothy, and to you and I today: God wrote a thesis on you and recorded it in a book He has in Heaven. Before you ever entered the womb, God wrote His thesis on the details involving the design of your purpose, listing the intentions and paths He had in mind for you.

In eternity past, there came a time when God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, sat down and studied your life and what it would mean, why it would be, and then He composed a “written thesis” entitled *Purpose*. Amazingly, your life has spent time in God’s mind.

One such thesis would be titled “Tim’s Purpose,” in which He began to write a composition on my particular purpose. When He finished the book, He said, “Now, when the time is right, I will create him.”

Other theses would be titled Tom’s Purpose, or Dave’s Purpose, or Rachel’s Purpose. And one has *your* name on it. God sat down, wrote a thesis about you and recorded it in Heaven. He said, “When the time is right, I’ll create him or her.” Which means the time must be right, because you’re here!

The time is “right” for you to understand and fulfill your destiny. The time is “right” for you to begin to live out the thesis of God for your life. Your being alive now is proof of it. Just as God took a book called the Bible and quickened it, making it a *rhema* (living) word to us, so He can, and will, do with the book concerning you.

God wants to “quicken His thesis” about you *to* you. He wants His words of purpose made alive inside you. He wants it to become *rhema*. He wants His composition written about you to

come alive so that His book about you isn't just read—it's lived. It's a living thesis for you, residing inside you. Make no mistake about it. God, the Author, wrote your plan well. He left out no details. He thought through all of the chapters and, as Paul would write to the Hebrews, God is not only the Author, He's also the Finisher.

He will help you finish the journey. He will assist you in finishing the "plans." He will help you on all that is set forth. God says, "I wrote it down. I made it plain. I declared your purpose and I'll even help you do it!"

Prothesis—before you were born God wrote your thesis. Then He made you with everything it would take to do it. With His Holy Spirit quickening and guiding, and with His help, you can do it.

I want us to see this word in connection with another word.

For [the] administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth; in him, in whom we have also obtained an inheritance, being marked out beforehand according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his own will.

(Ephesians 1:10-11 Darby)

Purpose is the Greek word *prothesis*. Counsel is the Greek word *boulē* (Strong's 1012) and it means the will, to decree, to aim, and it also refers to the decision-making process of government. The parliamentary government in modern Greece is called the *boulē*, not the Congress like in the United States.

Why do they use the word *boulē*? Because *boulē* means deliberation and reflection. The Greek government reflects and

COME HOME

deliberates before the decrees are made. They reflect on the projects needed as they meet in counsel together. They reflect and deliberate before the will is written down (before it's recorded).

God says before *We* made you (God said in Genesis, let *Us* make man in Our image and likeness, referring to the Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), before *We* wrote your thesis, *We* reflected on your purpose. *We* deliberated and thought it through. *We* exchanged ideas concerning you and took counsel together concerning Our will for your life.

The ways intended for you were reflected upon by the parliament of Heaven. The parliamentary counsel of Heaven decreed and declared the intended purpose for each man and woman. As They wrote the thesis for each person, They had it recorded, and when it was the right time, we were born.

David says in Psalm 139, "*My days were written down before there was one of them.*" Acts 13:36 (NKJV) says, "*For David, after he served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers....*" The word *will* in that verse is *boulē*. The parliamentary counsel of Heaven had a purpose, a thesis, for David to accomplish and David served it. Acts 13:36 (AMPC) says, "*For David, after he had served God's will and purpose and counsel in his own generation, fell asleep [in death]....*"

David discovered and fulfilled the purpose of God for his life. He had purpose in his generation and he accomplished it. You, too, have purpose. God wrote your story beforehand and is now working on paths that will enable you to fulfill it in your generation.

I said earlier there were two words readily seen in the Greek word for purpose (*prothesis*). One is, of course, *thesis*. The second word is *prosthesis*, which refers to artificial limbs. It used to be if someone's leg had to be cut off, a wooden leg or a peg was

RESTORING LOST PURPOSE

put in its place. Why make an artificial limb? To restore a lost purpose. To restore lost movement and balance and to restore some kind of use or purpose that was missing, cut off.

What a word this is for us! What a hope this gives us. You may say, “My life has been cut off from any real meaning. There’s something missing. Years ago, I did this or that and I feel cut off because of it. I sinned. I did something I’m ashamed of. I did something I know was absolutely wrong. I miserably failed. I made decisions that were selfish. I made choices that were directly opposed to why I’m here.”

Quite possibly, a situation may have occurred that you had no control over and cut you off. Perhaps a tragedy took place, or you experienced a broken relationship, or suffered some form of abuse. Because of that, it seems as if you’ve been severed from any real purpose. You’ve been cut off from a life of significance and meaning and the balance in your life was thrown askew.

God may have a thesis that He reflected upon and wrote for you, but life or fate has written you a different one and you’re living cut off from God’s thesis. You can’t complete His thesis for you because what is needed to do so was amputated from you. What I want to emphasize is that your purpose—the reason you are here—doesn’t change. It never changes. God is not rewriting your story; He already wrote it!

Because He is God and is all-powerful and all-knowing, if you will turn to Him, trust Him, and let Him, then He, the Master Surgeon, can reconstruct lost purpose. Prosthesis: He can give you a new limb. He can give you what it takes to restore lost movement, lost balance, and lost purpose, even if it was amputated from you.

You say, “But, Apostle Tim, I would walk with a limp.” So did Jacob! That lying, stealing, conniving, cheating man who wrestled

COME HOME

with God went on to fulfill his purpose and destiny. He wrestled with his destiny for 97 years, but he finally got it. Yes, he walked with a limp, but he walked and God's thesis was reconstructed with, eventually, the Messiah coming through his descendants. When submitted to God, Jacob's purpose was reconstructed.

You may say or be thinking, "Well, where my purpose is concerned, I just don't have a leg to stand on." God says, "I'll make one for you because My purpose is not changeable." God says, "Me and you—we can do it. I'll help you. I'll do miracles. I'll help you fulfill My words."

Hebrews 6:17-19 (KJV) says concerning this:

Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.

Immutability and immutable mean unchangeable. It's the Greek word *ametathetos* derived from *metatithemi* (Strong's 276/3346). The theme is unchangeable! The theme of my *boulē* is unchangeable. *Metatithemi!*

Let's use a word we may understand better for immutable: the word *mutations*. No mutations! God says, "No mutations. My theme is set before you. It's like concrete. No mutations." God says, "Let that give you strong consolation. Let that be an anchor for your soul." God says, "My theme, My thesis, My purpose is set

before you. And if cut off, I will restore it." He confirms it with an oath!

He says, "I, God, do solemnly swear that you can be who I have made you to be. I, God, do solemnly swear that you are an heir to My promises for your life. I swear I can reconstruct you. I swear My future for you is good. I swear there's hope before you. I swear I have a plan for you. I swear I have given you a destiny. I swear My thesis was thought through about you. And I swear that before you were ever born, I saw to it that you would have all you would need, along with My help, to accomplish it."

God says, "I promise all My promises to you are good ones. I'll do what I said. Just walk together with Me. Walk in relationship with Me and you will discover and live out a life filled with purpose, significance, and meaning."

WRESTLING WITH DESTINY

But Jacob stayed behind by himself, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he couldn't get the best of Jacob as they wrestled, he deliberately threw Jacob's hip out of joint. The man said, "Let me go; it's daybreak." Jacob said, "I'm not letting you go 'til you bless me." The man said, "What's your name?" He answered, "Jacob." The man said, "But no longer. Your name is no longer Jacob. From now on it's Israel (God-Wrestler); you've wrestled with God and you've come through." Jacob asked, "And what's your name?" The man said, "Why do you want to know my name?" And

COME HOME

then, right then and there, he blessed him. Jacob named the place Peniel (God's Face) because, he said, "I saw God face-to-face and lived to tell the story!" The sun came up as he left Peniel, limping because of his hip. (This is why Israelites to this day don't eat the hip muscle; because Jacob's hip was thrown out of joint.)

(Genesis 32:24-31 MSG)

These verses occur when Jacob is 97 years old. It is the fascinating story of a prodigal wrestling with God concerning his destiny until the break of day. The name *Jacob* means supplanter, deceiver, conniver, cheater, defrauder, manipulator, the liar.

For 97 years, Jacob had lived up to the name Isaac and Rebekah had given him. He was a man of selfish ambitions and goals and he preyed upon the weaknesses of others. An example of this was when Jacob refused to feed his brother, Esau, until Esau sold him his birthright. He took advantage of his brother's weaknesses to promote himself. Whatever it took to get his way was fine with him.

Jacob was a loner. He liked being alone and didn't need anyone. People were simply tools he used to advance his agenda. Family meant very little to Jacob. He had tricked his father into giving him Esau's birthright, which had destroyed his relationship with his brother. He couldn't care less about building a family. In fact, he stayed a bachelor until he was 77 years old. Jacob didn't know how to love someone else.

Amazingly, how Jacob had become didn't change God's purpose and destiny for his life. Before the foundation of the world, before there was one day to Jacob's life, God sat down and wrote his thesis, his purpose for being. God said, "I need someone who

RESTORING LOST PURPOSE

will help Me start a nation of people—a nation I will be with and will bless. One that I will call *Israel*. Jacob is the man I choose for this. I'll change his name to Israel and work on him until I draw out My purpose in his life. Jacob is the man for the job. That is his thesis, his destiny, and his purpose.”

Though Jacob had taken wrong paths, as prodigals so often do, God continued the process of bringing forth his destiny. When Jacob was 77 years old, Isaac said to him, “That’s it, Jacob. You’ve lived at home long enough. Now go to Padanaram and find a wife.” And Jacob did. In fact, he found two wives: Rachel and Leah.

On Jacob’s way to Padanaram, he came to a certain spot and stopped for the night. He didn’t realize it was the destiny spot at first and wouldn’t realize it for years. He piled up some rocks for his pillow and went to sleep. While asleep, God appeared to him in a dream.

Jacob saw Heaven open and the angels of God were ascending and descending on a ladder. God appeared to him and said, “I am the God of Abraham and Isaac and I want to give to you the land you’re walking on. Your seed shall be like the dust of the earth. I’ll be with you and keep you.”

Genesis 28:15 tells us in essence that God said, “I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you. I’m not going to leave you alone because My thesis on you is not changeable. I will not leave you until I do what I told you I would do.” Jacob woke up and named that spot *Bethel*, which means the house of God, the gate of Heaven.

Rachel and Leah are stories of purpose in their own right. When Jacob arrived at Padanaram, he saw Rachel and his eyes lit up. She was beautiful. After a time, he asked Laban, her father, if he could marry her and it was agreed upon. Jacob worked for

COME HOME

seven years for Rachel, but on their wedding night, Laban had tricked the trickster. He snuck Leah into the wedding tent in the darkness, instead of Rachel.

Leah was the opposite of Rachel. She was not pretty. She was extremely nearsighted and considered as not desirable. No one wanted to marry her. Knowing this, her father decided to do something, which is why he snuck her into the tent. When Jacob woke up the next morning, he could see clearly what had happened, saying to Laban, “What have you done?”

But again, God had a purpose in mind. God saw something in Leah that no one else could see. By man’s standards, Leah was unattractive, but God saw a girl of great worth. He saw purpose and destiny.

What did God see in Leah? He saw Gad, Asher, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun—eight of the 12 tribes of Israel. God saw ongoing heritage to this day. God always seeks to draw out purpose.

After living 20 years in Padanaram, God said, “Jacob, I want you to return to Bethel. I want you to go back home. I want you to go back to the place that you named the house of God.”

Jacob didn’t want to go. Why? Because he would have to face his brother Esau, the one he had deceived, connived against, and hurt. The one he manipulated, bruised and used. Jacob was convinced that Esau, a great hunter, would kill him. *If I go back, I’m dead*, he thought.

Jacob was convinced Esau would kill him, his wives and all his children. But the call of God was strong upon Jacob at this point. Destiny’s currents were drawing him, and Jacob decided to start for home, bringing all of his family with him.

RESTORING LOST PURPOSE

Genesis 32 occurs the night before Jacob is going to see Esau for the first time in 20 years. Tomorrow would be the day. Jacob had sent his men ahead to tell Esau he was coming. With these men, he had sent hundreds of animals as presents for Esau. He sent flock after flock, herd after herd, waves of presents for his brother. He was hoping it would appease Esau's wrath. *Maybe if I give him cattle, sheep, and camels, He won't kill me and my family,* Jacob thought.

After Jacob sent his men with all of the animals, Jacob sent his wife and children across the stream Jabbok, which left him alone. Wrestling with your destiny can sometimes be a very lonely thing. As he was there alone, the night wore on, and a man appeared in Jacob's camp. We know today it wasn't an ordinary man. God was coming to Jacob in bodily form.

Jacob was seeing God again like he had seen him 20 years ago at Bethel, at the house of God. He had come back and heard God again. While Jacob had changed some things, he hadn't changed nearly enough. He was still the great manipulator, the cheater. As incredible as it seems to us today, when Jacob sees the Lord coming into his camp, he dives at Him and starts to wrestle Him. He grabs hold and will not let go.

For a very good reason, God lets Jacob do it. Can you picture Jacob holding onto God's leg and being dragged around the camp? God allowed that to take place. What's going on here? We have to see under the skin of this a bit. Just who is Jacob wrestling with? We know that, physically, it was God, but who was he really wrestling with? He was wrestling with himself. He was fighting with himself because when God's presence comes to an individual's life, to a prodigal's life, there's an exposing of flesh, attitudes, desires, sin, and heart motives. After 97 years, it

COME HOME

had all come to a head. Jacob is confronted with who he is, and what he's become, and he doesn't like it.

Jacob knows that what he did was wrong. He knows he cheated to get what he has, by manipulating and using people to get what he wants. He knows his actions and words hurt so many. He knows he lived a life of greed and selfishness. He has been vengeful and self-aspiring, treating people and family with no respect. He stepped on everyone he could to advance himself.

Jacob is now confronted with the fact that is who he is. In sheer frustration he lashes out at God, and God lets him do it. It's almost as though God was saying, "It's okay, Jacob. Go ahead and get it out of you. Use Me this time because I can take it. You don't have to use others. Use Me. Go ahead and get it out because it's stopping your destiny. Purge yourself of it once and for all."

Jacob, having come to grips with who he was, grabs hold of God and says, "You have to change me. I want to be a person You can bless. I want to know why I'm here. I have to know Your plan for my life and the thesis You wrote about me. God, help me. God, bless me."

When God knew the repentance was real, He then knocked Jacob's hip out of joint and from that day forward Jacob walked with a limp. It would remind him every day, "You ran from God for 97 years. Don't do it again. Walk with the Lord and in His ways."

God then says to him, "What is your name?" And Jacob probably hung his head as he said, "Jacob. My name is cheater, manipulator, deceiver." He probably felt the shame that accompanied his ways. But God was ready now to bring forth Jacob's destiny and God said to him, "You will no longer be called Jacob. From now on your name is Israel. Israel means Prince of God. From now on you are a Prince of God."

RESTORING LOST PURPOSE

The thesis written before there was one day to Jacob's life was finally brought about. Jacob began as a new man to walk out his purpose. He was Israel, not Jacob. He was a Prince of God, not a deceiver. The unfolding of purpose transformed him and he became a completely different man. He thought differently, talked differently. He became very devoted to his family and actually became a loving and kind man.

Prodigals often wrestle with who they are or who they have become. Sometimes they wrestle with God, fighting Him because of things that have happened—things they feel He should have changed or stopped. A prodigal will wrestle with conscience, motives of the heart, selfishness, pride, and greed. They may wonder why they are here, and what their destiny and purpose is.

But the great Father of love and compassion says to the prodigals, as He said to Jacob, "I am not leaving you alone until what I have declared over you takes place. I will wrestle destiny out of you. I will wrestle with you until the purpose I have in mind for you comes to pass. I will not give up on you until My destiny, planned before you were ever born, comes to pass."

A TESTIMONY (ANONYMOUS)

The amount of sadness I feel when I look back on my childhood is numbing. I know there are many who have gone through far worse, but I also know I didn't deserve to be sexually assaulted at the age of six by a cousin. I didn't deserve to be beaten for opening a bag of potato chips when there was already one open.

COME HOME

No child deserves to be lied to, belittled, abused, and brokenhearted.

I grew up in church and I've been saved since I was five years old. Though I made mistakes and failed Him many times, He never forsook me, and His mercies have been new every morning. I sometimes have to remind myself we all have stumbled, but it's all about the comeback.

I was in a bad relationship for several years following high school that caused serious damage. While everything seemed fine in the beginning, it slowly began to change, and this person cheated on me, he lied to me constantly, told me how stupid I was, called me every name in the book, told me that I needed to kill myself, and physically, emotionally, and mentally abused me. The amount of lies I had to tell my family about where I got the bruises, black eyes, and busted lips was ridiculous. The crazy thing is, I continued to stay with him. In some way, I felt like I deserved it. My whole life, I had been treated like I was nothing. Why should I move on? I felt like this guy was right. Maybe I was worthless and didn't deserve to live. In 2013, I checked into a hotel and at his prodding, took an overdose of medication. I just wanted to end all the pain I was feeling. I ended up leaving the hotel and tried to drive home but had to call 911 because I was so afraid.

I ended up staying in a behavioral health clinic for five days. After that, things went further south. I started partying, doing any kind of drug I could get my hands on and received attention from guys in wrong and shameful ways. I stopped going to church. I stopped

RESTORING LOST PURPOSE

reading God's Word. Praying wasn't habitual anymore and the only thing I could think of was my next fix. I had officially hit the rockiest parts of rock bottom. Driving my friends around for 10 hours a day to deliver drugs and to pick up drugs was my new job. I barely slept and I barely ate. From 2013 to almost 2015, I tried to fill the void in my heart by replacing my love for God with drugs.

Looking back, it's by the grace of God I was able to walk away from it all. I woke up one morning, hungover and feeling like absolute garbage. I told everyone that they needed to leave my apartment. I never hung out with those people again. I went back to my church, started seeking God, and had my foot back in the door to getting back to fixing my relationship with God.

Unfortunately, I still felt a void in my soul that I didn't let God fill. So I tried to fill it myself by finding a guy who liked me. At least I thought he did. He appeared to be what I was looking for, he came to church with me...but fast-forward, I became pregnant by him and everything changed when I told him.

I have been a single mom for exactly four years now, and I love every moment. Even through difficult "mom" times, I wouldn't trade this for anything. My child is so loved and wanted. The bottom line is, even though I have searched for love in all the wrong ways, Jesus never fails me. Even though I've been insecure my whole life, I am reminded that I am "more precious than jewels." And even though I have disappointed my family, myself, and even God, my

COME HOME

heart will always be mended by His steadfast love.
But God.

This. This is my story of redemption. I am a child of
God.

DECREES

1. I decree God is restoring lost purpose and I am reclaiming His purpose, His thesis, for my life and the lives of my prodigals.
2. I call back my prodigal and decree their destiny will be fulfilled. Their purpose will not be cut off.
3. I decree my future and the future of my prodigal is good.
4. I decree God's Word is an anchor for my soul. I shall not be moved.
5. I decree God's Word is unshakable and will not return void. It will accomplish its purpose.
6. I decree my prodigal was created for God, His hand is on your life, we call forth the destiny and purpose God ordained for you.
7. I decree the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies are new every morning.
8. I decree that even when I can't see it or feel it, God is working behind the scenes to bring my loved one home.
9. I decree God's amazing love and presence is overwhelming my prodigal and there is no escaping Him and His plan for your life.

COME HOME

10. I decree awakening in my prodigal, eyes to be opened, and heart to be receptive.

Note

1. All references to *Strong's* regarding Greek/Hebrew word translations are taken from *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* by James Strong; <https://www.biblehub.com/strongs.htm>; accessed September 8, 2023.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

TIM SHEETS

Dr. Tim Sheets is an apostle, pastor, and author based in southwestern Ohio. He ministers nationally and internationally at conferences, churches, seminars, and Bible schools. He is a graduate of Christ for the Nations Institute and has a Doctorate of Divinity from Christian Life School of Theology.

He is the author of: *Angel Armies; Angel Armies on Assignment; Planting the Heavens; Heaven Made Real; The New Era of Glory; Ninjas with Feathers; Prayers and Decrees That Activate Angel Armies*; as well as *Come Home* and *God's Got This*, both coauthored with his daughter, Rachel Shafer.

Dr. Sheets is the founder of AwakeningNow Prayer Network and the pastor of Oasis Church in Middletown, Ohio.

Dr. Sheets resides with his wife, Carol, in Lebanon, Ohio. They have two children, Rachel (Mark) Shafer, and Joshua (Jessica) Sheets, and 7 grandchildren (Madeline, Lily, Jude, Jaidin, Joelle, Sam, and Grace).

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RACHEL SHAFER

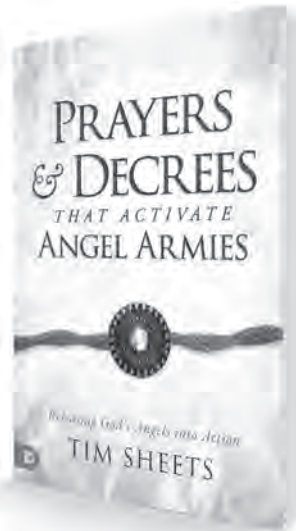
Rachel Shafer is an author, worship leader, songwriter, and speaker. She ministers regularly at church services and conferences. Her book *Expect God* answers the question of what to do when your problem is hiding your promise. Her message is one of deep faith, abiding hope, and expectation in life's unexpected moments. In her book *God's Got This*, she teamed up with her father, Tim Sheets, to provide a powerful resource for parents and children filled with devotions and biblical decrees to speak over every season of life.

Rachel is the worship leader at Oasis Church in Middletown, Ohio, and has released many recording projects with Oasis Worship including "I'll Be the One," "God of Breakthrough," "War Cry", and "A New Day." She also released "America's Anthem," a song filled with prayers and decrees over our nation.

Rachel resides in Ohio with her husband, Mark, and their four children, Madeline, Lily, Jude, and Jaidin.

Rachel is available to minister for weekly services, conferences, and gatherings of all types. She has been interviewed on podcasts, TV stations, and radio. To contact Rachel, visit Rachel Shafer Ministries at rachelshafer.com.

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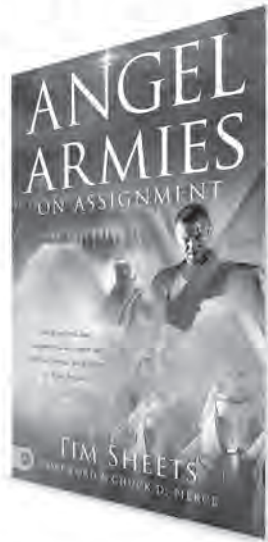
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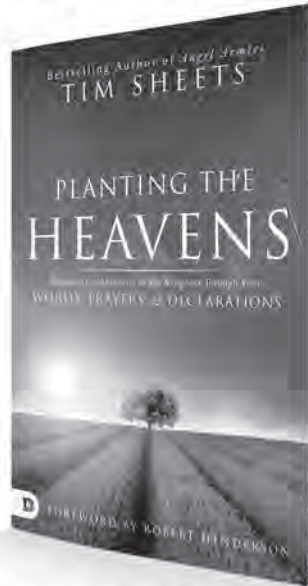
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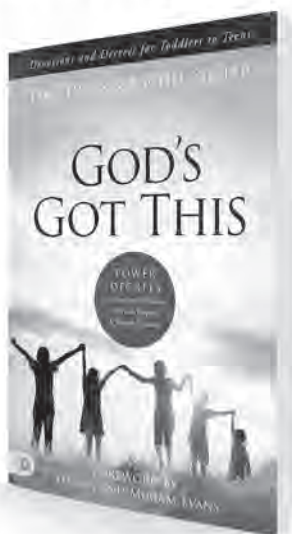
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This hilarious and impactful story will answer tough questions about God, while empowering you to live with strength and confidence. On this exciting journey, you will discover how partnering with God's angel army can bring victory to your life and Kingdom transformation to the world around you!

"What did you think angels did?" Joph asked.

"I don't know," I admitted. "Like, sit on clouds and play harps all day."

Joph rolled his eyes. "Well, I do play a mean harp, but no. We are defending you, secretly and unseen, fighting against evil forces."

I scrunched my nose in confusion. "When? How? I never see any of that happen!"

"I know." Joph struck a karate pose. "We're like ninjas. With feathers."

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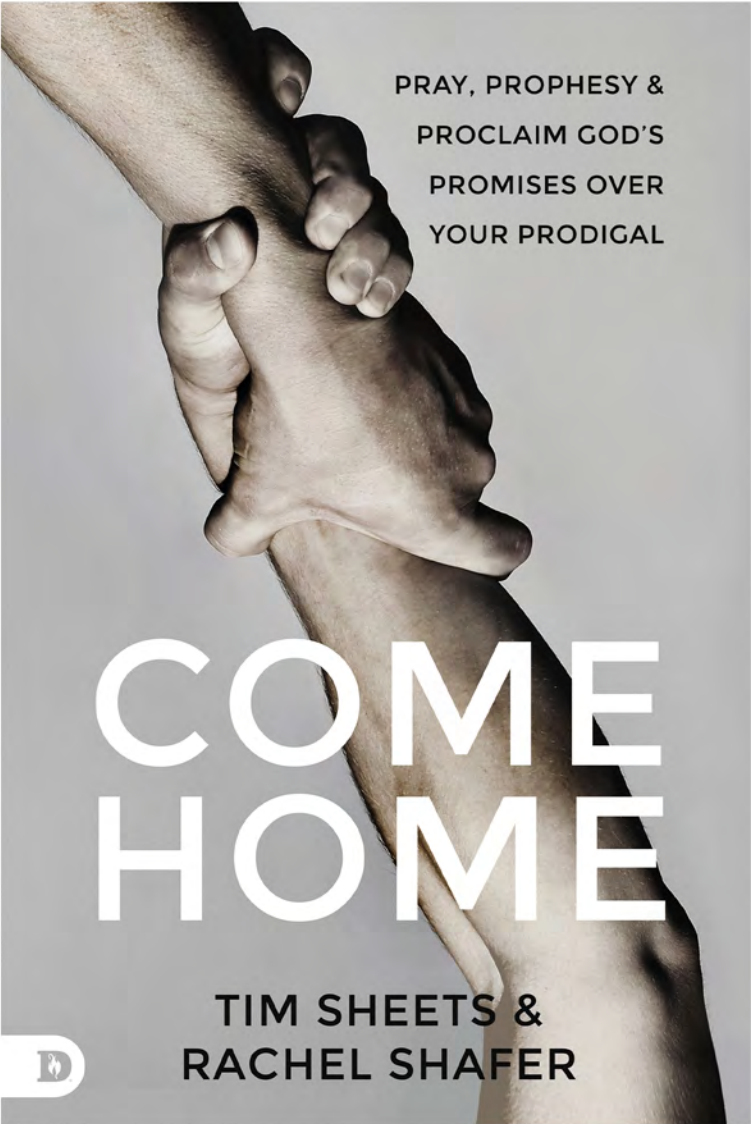


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