I was in a long line for a popular ride at an amusement park with our two children, Jonathan and Alexandra, years ago. At first everyone was in a single file, but as we moved closer to the ride we entered this small room about twenty feet by twenty feet. We were the first inside and we walked to the front doors. As we stood there so excited, knowing that we would get the best choice of seats, other people began crowding in behind us. I tried to politely hold our position at the front, but a few teenagers cleverly maneuvered ahead of us. Then, a few more, and more, and more.

We ended up being pushed all the way to the very back of the room right where we’d entered originally. I tried not to let it bother me. After all, we were there to have fun. A young woman worker came out and stood before the front doors. She greeted everyone and said we were just about ready to board the ride. She gave us instructions for getting on.

Then she said, “Okay, we’re ready to go. Now, turn around and go back out the same doors you came in.” That was right where we were standing. Suddenly, the last were made first!

In the same way, all God has to do is shift the direction, and you’ll go from the back to the front. One touch of His favor can put you fifty years ahead of where you thought you’d be. You can be at a lower position at the office, you’re going along, being your best, honoring God, and suddenly things can change. One good break, one idea, one person who likes you,
and you look up and find yourself in a top job. You didn't see it coming. Things just fell into place.

What happened? You came into a shift. God can cause opportunity to find you. He has unexpected blessings where you suddenly meet the right person, or suddenly your health improves, or suddenly you're able to pay off your house. That's God shifting things in your favor. What used to be a struggle is not a struggle anymore. What should have taken years happened in a fraction of the time. You may feel like you're stuck right now. You could never accomplish a dream, never overcome a problem. It's just been too long. You've missed too many opportunities. But God is saying, "Get ready. I'm about to shift things." Doors will open for you that have not opened in the past. Those who were against you will suddenly change their minds and be for you. Problems that have dogged you for years will suddenly turn around. You are coming into a shift. Because you have honored God, He will put you in a position you never could have attained on your own. It's not just your education, not just your talent, or the family you come from. It's the hand of God shifting you to a new level of your destiny.

Sometimes you need faith and victory spoken over your life. Words have created power. When you receive them into your spirit, they can ignite seeds of increase on the inside. That's the reason I've written this book. You were not created to just get by with an average, unrewarding, or unfulfilling life. God created you to leave your mark on this generation. You have gifts and talents that you have not tapped into. There are new levels of your destiny still in front of you. But break out starts in your thinking. As you put these keys into action, making room for increase, expecting shifts of God's favor, praying bold prayers, and keeping the right perspective, then God will release floods of His goodness that will thrust you beyond barriers of the past into the extraordinary life you were designed to live.

I'm not just trying to make you feel good. I'm declaring, "A shift is coming." A shift in your health. A shift in your finances. A shift in a relationship. It may not look like it in the natural, but we serve a supernatural God. He's about to breathe in your direction in a new way.

The enemies you've seen in the past you will see no more. The addic-
tions and bad habits holding you back are being broken. God’s favor is being released in a new way. It will propel you forward. What should have taken you forty years to accomplish, God will do in a split second.

The shift is acceleration. The shift will take you where you could not have gone on your own. The shift is overcoming what a medical report said was impossible. The shift is seeing that wayward child change his mind and get back on the right course. The shift is having your best year when the circumstances say you should have a down year. The shift is seeing God not only provide but also do exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond.

Your new attitude should be: “God, I’m ready. I’m taking the limits off of You. I’m enlarging my vision. I may not see a way but I know You have a way. I declare I’m coming into a shift.”

You need to check doors that have been closed to you in the past. Things have shifted. The dream you had to start a new business, to go back to college, to take a mission trip—it may not have happened the first time, but that’s okay. It’s prepared you for this time. Don’t give up. This is a new day. Things have shifted. Pursue your dream again.

When God breathes in your direction, people change their mind. Closed doors suddenly open. The nos turn into yeses. Not now turns into It’s your time.

A construction manager I know had been out of a job for three years after twenty-five years of steady work. He’d had a very good position at a successful company, but when the recession hit and building tapered off, his company had to let him go. He went to one job interview after another, month after month, with no success. He finally took a much lower-level position in a small city, to which he had to travel a couple of hours every day. It was taking a toll on his health, his marriage, and his savings. It looked like his job situation would never change. But about six months later, his former boss called and said, “Hey, are you ready to go back to work?”

His old company had landed the largest contract in its history. He not only got his job back but also all of his benefits. He used to have to travel around the country. Now he gets to work in town. Plus, they increased his salary significantly. He said, “This is exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond.”
What happened? He came into a shift. Suddenly, things changed in his favor. One phone call. One contract. One good break. He went from barely getting by to having more than enough.

Now you need to get ready. These shifts are in your future.

The Israelites were enslaved for many years and mistreated by their captors. They were forced to work long hours and not given the proper rest or food. When they didn’t meet their quotas they were beaten with rods. It was very unfair. But one day, through a series of events, God supernaturally brought them out. The Scripture says that as they were leaving, “God caused them to have favor with their enemies.”

Notice, God caused them to have favor. The same people who had oppressed them for years, the same foes who had pushed them down and mistreated them, suddenly changed their minds. They said in effect, “We’ve decided that we like you now. We want to be good to you.”

Before they left, the captors gave the Israelites their gold, silver, and jewels. What happened? The Israelites came into a shift. God changed the mind of their enemy. Proverbs says God can turn the heart of a king. We may not be able to change people’s minds, but God can. He controls the whole universe.

You may have people in your life like this, some who don’t like you, a boss who is hard to get along with, or a family member who is disrespectful. It’s easy to become discouraged and to think, “This will always be this way. They will always be against me.”

No, stay in faith. God has a shift coming. God knows how to cause them to like you. God can cause them to see you in a new light. They may have been against you year after year, but when God shifts things they’ll go out of their way to be good to you. Instead of hindering you, they’ll help you.

Bottom line: God will not allow any person to keep you from your destiny. They may be bigger, stronger, or more powerful, but God knows how to shift things around and get you to where you’re supposed to be.

I have a friend who worked for someone he never liked. Nobody at the company liked this young supervisor, who was condescending and a source of frustration year after year. At first, it looked like this young man could be supervising at this company for another twenty or thirty years.
My friend has a good attitude, but deep down he thought, “Putting up with this guy for a long time will be a real pain. I don’t know if I can take it.”

Then, one morning he arrived at work, and management called a staff meeting. They explained that the young supervisor’s wife had been transferred to another state for her job. The unpopular supervisor had resigned that morning.

Half the staff fell on their knees and offered a prayer of thanks to God! What happened? A divine shift. Suddenly, God changed things.

Quit worrying about those trying to hold you back. God knows how to move the wrong people out of your life and bring the right people in. And even if God doesn’t move them, it says in Psalms, “You can run through a troop and leap over a wall.”

God can cause you to go over them, or around them, or even through them, but God will get you to where you’re supposed to be. The truth is, you are one shift from seeing a dream come to pass. One shift from paying your house off. One shift from seeing your health improve. One shift from meeting the right person.

It says in Isaiah: “This is God’s year to act.” Not next year. Not five years. Not in the Sweet By and By. This is the year God will shift things in your favor. He is lining it all up. What you could not make happen on your own, God will cause you to accomplish. It will be bigger than you thought. It will happen quicker than you imagined, and it will be more rewarding than you ever dreamed possible.

In Genesis 48, there is a story of Jacob when he was an old man very close to death. His son Joseph came to visit him and say his good-byes. He and his father were very close. Joseph was Jacob’s favorite child. He was the youngest son. You may remember him as the child to whom Jacob gave the coat of many colors.

At one point Jacob thought Joseph was dead. The father was very sad until he found out Joseph was alive and living in Egypt. They reunited just as Jacob was about to pass. Joseph was standing before him with his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, Jacob’s grandsons.

Jacob said, “Joseph, I will bless your sons as if they were my own children.”
The right hand in those days always gave the greatest blessing. It belonged to the firstborn son. That was the tradition. So Joseph put his oldest son, Manasseh, in front of Jacob’s right hand and his younger son, Ephraim, on his left.

Jacob was nearly blind. When he went to give the blessing Jacob crossed his hands and put his right on the younger son, Ephraim, and his left on Manasseh, the older son.

Joseph said, “No, Dad. You can’t see. I had them lined up. I put Manasseh in front of your right hand. He deserves it. Give him the greater blessing.”

Then Jacob said something very interesting. It gives us insight into our God. He said, “No, Joseph. I’ve crossed my hands on purpose. Ephraim may have come second, he may have been in the back, he may not deserve it. He didn’t qualify for it. He is not next in line, but I’m shifting him to a new position. I’m taking him from the back up to the front. I will give him what he doesn’t deserve.”

That’s the way our God is. He has shifts in your future that will put you in positions you didn’t earn, you didn’t qualify for, or weren’t next in line to receive. Maybe you didn’t have seniority, but God, just like He did with Ephraim, will cross His hands and say, “I will move them up from the back to the front, from not being qualified to suddenly being qualified, from being looked down on or disrespected to being honored and seen with influence and credibility.”

When you move up some people will be bothered by it. They’ll think: “That’s not fair. I worked harder. I have more seniority.” But the fact is, it’s just the goodness of God. He said because you honor Him, He would give you houses that you didn’t have to build. You would reap from vineyards you did not plant.

That’s God crossing His hands, giving you what should have taken years to earn. God is saying to you what Jacob said to Ephraim, “I will bless you on purpose. I will move you up. I will accelerate your dreams. I will give you what you didn’t deserve. I’ll shift you into a position you could never have reached on your own.”

We can all make excuses: “Joel, this is not for me today. I’m not qualified. I’ve made too many mistakes. I don’t have the talent, the size, the personality, the confidence.”
God says: “I know all that. I created you, but I’m about to cross My hands and bless you in such a way that everyone will know it’s Me and not you.” Now don’t talk yourself out of it.

Moses said, “God, not me. I stutter. I can’t go speak to Pharaoh.”

God said, “Moses, don’t worry about it. I’m crossing My hands. I’m giving you what you need.”

Gideon said, “God, I come from the poorest family. I’m the least one around here. I can’t lead this army.”

God said, “Gideon, don’t worry. I’m crossing My hands. You’re coming into a shift. I will move you from the back to the front.”

David could have said, “God, I’m too small, too young, too inexperienced. There’s a whole army of talented, successful, confident warriors who can face Goliath.”

And God would have said, “David, I know that. I could have chosen them, but I’m crossing My hands. I’m moving you up from the background to the foreground, from the shepherd field to the battlefield, all the way to the throne.”

Esther could have said, “God, I can’t go in there and speak to the king. He will not listen to me. I’m an orphan. I don’t have any influence.”

And God would have said, “Esther, don’t worry. I’ve got you covered. I’m crossing My hands. I will give you respect, credibility, honor that you didn’t deserve, you didn’t work for.”

A shift is coming! Whatever level you are at now, God is about to cross His hands and put you in a position you never could have reached on your own. He will give you what you weren’t in line to receive.

Why don’t you start expecting unprecedented favor, believing for God to do something new in your life? I know you can say like me that God has been good to you. You’re blessed and healthy and you have a good family and a great job, and that’s all perfect. But I can tell you that you haven’t seen anything yet!

God has shifts in your future that if He showed you now you wouldn’t believe. It’s exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond. You think you’re hitting on all cylinders, but if you only knew what God has in store. It’s like you’re in second gear. You’re making progress. You’re healthy. You’re moving forward. But God is about to shift you out of second, past third,
past fourth, into overdrive. You will see the surpassing greatness of God’s favor.

Because you’ve honored God and lived with excellence and integrity, God will take you beyond your training, beyond your education, beyond your income, beyond where anyone in your family has gone before you. This shift will put you at a place where you look back and say, “Wow, God. You have amazed me with Your goodness.”

When the Israelites were in the desert headed toward the Promised Land they had manna to eat each day. It was similar to bread. After a while they grew tired of it. They complained to Moses that they didn’t have any meat to eat. Moses told God about their concerns. God said, “Moses, I will give you meat not for one day or five days or twenty days, but for a whole month.”

Moses said, “God, that’s impossible. There are two million people out here. Even if we butchered all of our flocks, all of our herds, we wouldn’t have that much meat.”

God replied, “Moses, is there any limit to My power?”

He was saying, “Just because you don’t see a way, Moses, doesn’t mean I don’t have a way. All I have to do is shift a few things around and I can bring it to pass.”

That’s what God did. Numbers 11:31 says, “God shifted the wind and brought quail in from the sea and caused it to fall into their camp.”

Notice how good God is to His children. They didn’t even have to go out and hunt or fish. The quail came to them. They just went out of their tent and picked up as many as they wanted.

What am I saying? God knows how to shift things so that blessings come to you. The right people search you out. Good breaks find you.

I have a friend who works for a professional sports team. He wasn’t raised in church. He started watching our program and he gave his life to Christ. He decided to get into a good Bible-based church. All he owned were very casual clothes, T-shirts and jeans, tennis shoes. He went to a church and they were very accepting, like ours. It doesn’t matter what you wear, but he had a desire to dress up to go to church. He had never owned a suit before. He went to the mall and looked at some different suits, but
they were more than he wanted to spend. He could certainly afford them. He was just very frugal.

One day he was running an errand and he randomly met this man. They struck up a conversation. This man found out how my friend worked for the professional sports team. The man told my friend that he loved going to the team’s games, but so many of them were sold out he rarely had the chance to buy tickets.

My friend is very generous. He said, “A lot of times I have extra tickets. I’ll call you and you can come to a game.”

The man attended a game, and afterward he thanked my friend. “You’ve been so good to me I want to do something good for you,” he said. “I own a clothing store. I want to make you a custom-made suit.”

The last time I talked to my friend he said, “Joel, I have sixteen custom-made suits. He’s given them all to me. Eight sport coats, a tuxedo. My whole closet is filled with dress clothes.”

When you honor God, when you’re good to people, kind, compassionate, and merciful, the blessings will come looking for you. Like the quail, you don’t have to go after them. God will shift things to cause the right people to come across your path. God will put you at the right place at the right time so provision, opportunity, comes to you.

Zechariah said it this way: “It’s not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God.” That word spirit in the Hebrew means “breath.” It’s saying it will not happen just by your talent, just by your connections, just by those you know. It will happen because God breathes in our direction. God shifts the winds and blows healing and promotion, restoration, our way.

How will you get well? The medical report says it’s impossible? No, God is breathing healing your way. Health, wholeness, and restoration are headed toward you.

How will you accomplish your dreams? You may not know the right people or have the money or feel like you have the talent. But God is breathing ideas, resources, and the right people.

If you will stay faithful and just keep honoring God, like my friend discovered, suddenly things will change, suddenly you come into abundance, suddenly your child straightens up, suddenly you get well.
A few years ago, one of our faithful church members suffered a major stroke. He was only in his midfifties, but he was paralyzed on the left-hand side of his body. He couldn’t walk or talk. The prognosis wasn’t good. He was told that with intense therapy he might regain his speech, but he would never walk again.

For two years he had no feeling on the left side of his body. He was in a wheelchair and had to have constant care. It didn’t look good, but this man kept coming to Lakewood. He knew all God had to do was shift the winds and blow healing and restoration his way.

One morning he woke up, and suddenly he began to have feeling on the left side of his body. The doctors, the therapists, the nurses—they were amazed. They couldn’t understand it. Long story short: a few weeks later, he walked into Lakewood with no help for the first time since he had that stroke.

He spoke clearly. He didn’t stumble when he walked. He didn’t limp. He walked like nothing had ever been wrong. What happened? He came into a shift. God breathed in his direction. What he could not do in his own power, in his own strength, suddenly became possible.

You may have struggled in an area, your health, your finances, with a relationship, for a long time and you keep wondering, “Will this ever change?” God is saying, “Yes. A shift is coming. I will shift you out of sickness into health. I will shift you out of lack into abundance. I will shift you out of struggle into ease. I’m about to cross My hands and give you what you do not deserve.”

Now you need to get ready. You are coming into a shift. Because you have been faithful and honored God, I believe and declare, God will put you in a position you could have never gotten to on your own. Doors will open that have never opened before for you. What should have taken you forty years to accomplish God will do in a split second. You’re coming into acceleration.

Suddenly, a dream comes to pass. Suddenly, a promise is fulfilled. Suddenly, the negative turns around. You need to get ready for the surpassing greatness of God’s favor!