

## DON'T LET YOUR FAMILY BE PART OF THE STATISTICS

**"Child Sexual Abuse is a widespread problem."**

OF ALL VICTIMS UNDER 18, 2 OUT OF 3 ARE AGES 12-17



■ 34% under age 12 ■ 66% age 12-17

RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline | 800.656.HOPE | [online.rainn.org](http://online.rainn.org)  
Please visit [rainn.org/statistics/children-and-teens](http://rainn.org/statistics/children-and-teens) for full citation.<sup>2</sup>

**"Mass shootings in U.S. on a record pace in 2023 so far."**

Source: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/mass-shootings-in-u-s-on-a-record-pace-in-2023-so-far>

**"Domestic violence rates remain high three years after record spike during pandemic."**

Source: <https://www.foxnews.com/us/domestic-violence-rates-remain-high-three-years-record-spike-pandemic>

**"Young people in the U.S. have been dying at higher rates of both suicide and homicide, a new analysis shows."**

Source: <https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2023-06-15/cdc-study-shows-rise-in-violent-death-rates-among-u-s-youth>

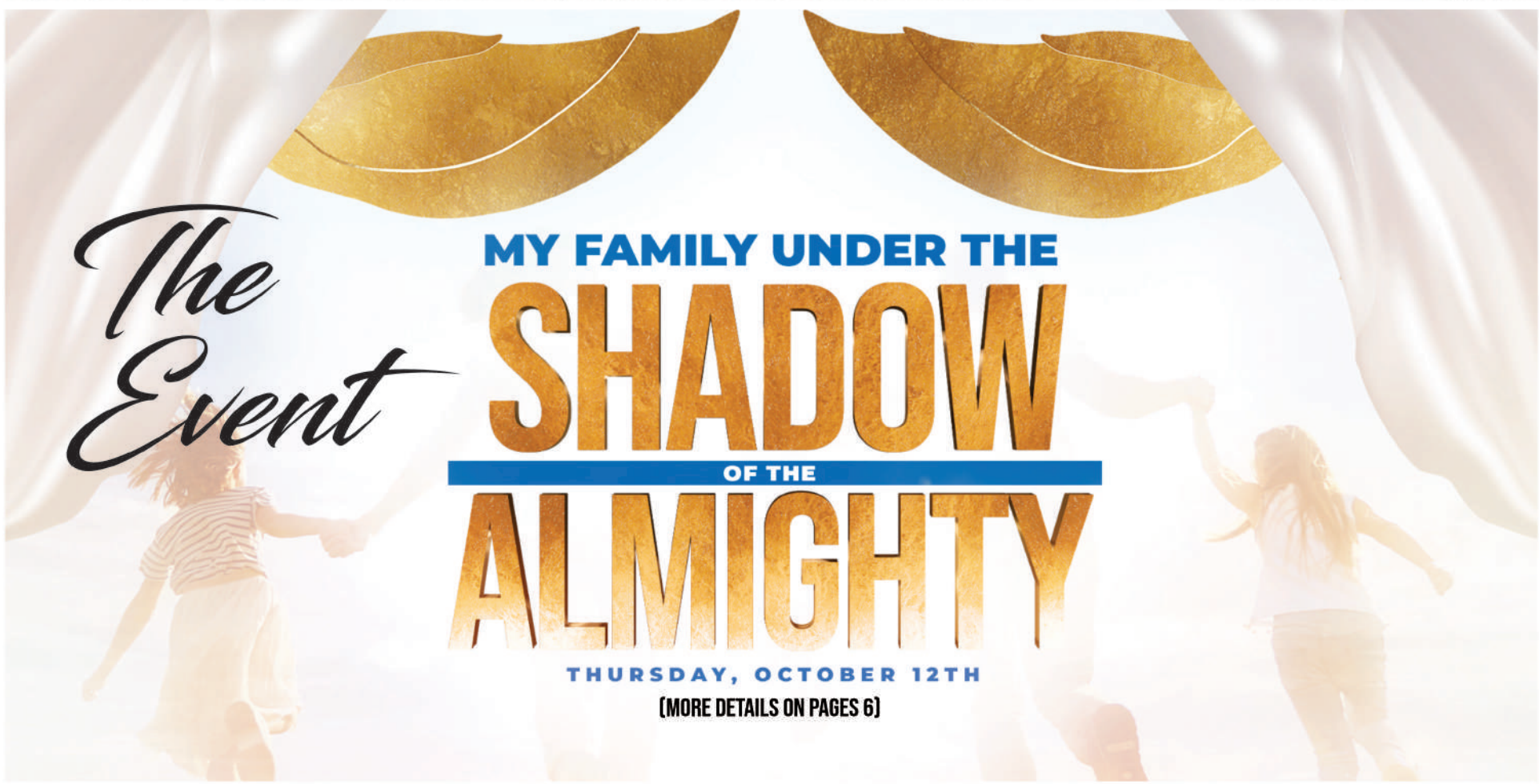


*The Event*

**MY FAMILY UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12TH

(MORE DETAILS ON PAGES 6)



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## | IN THIS EDITION |

### MY FAMILY UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY

Everyone dreams of a happy and harmonious home. Some go to the extent of planning their lives and career paths, solely focusing on providing the best for their family. However, external problems and tragedies can affect our family in negative ways, causing us to feel helpless, hopeless, stressed, and anxious.

Many families have been torn apart by addictions, broken marriages, death, children who rebel and get involved with the wrong crowds, financial setbacks, etc. Problems can come unexpectedly and affect everyone, regardless of status and title. If this has been your family's situation, know there is no situation too great for God to turn around. Family is such a precious gift. Why not entrust your life and your family to God, who created the family in the first place? He understands each family member and holds all the answers. He desires the best for each one of us. He can deliver your loved ones from the negativity and give you peace and guidance throughout these difficult moments you may be facing.

Thus, on Thursday, October 12th, at the Universal Church near you, we will have this faith movement to place our families on the Altar under God's protection. On this day, we will have strong prayers on behalf of your family, and you will receive a free Prayer Cloth of Psalms 91 for Family Protection to take home. Take advantage of this opportunity. We invite you and your family to experience the peace God intends for your family.

## | BEATING DEPRESSION |

Depression is a sadness felt in the deepest part of one's soul. It causes a sense of hopelessness and exhaustion so great that a person loses the motivation to do anything and some to live at all. It is a sickness of the soul. But who can heal the soul other than the Savior of Souls, the Lord Jesus?

On Fridays, at every Universal Church, we have a service for Deliverance from Depression. Visit a branch near you today. Make a Chain of Prayer by attending a prayer meeting near you for seven consecutive weeks. You will receive practical steps, counseling, and spiritual help through prayers to overcome. You won't regret it.

There are thousands of testimonials worldwide that prove a Chain of Prayer works. You, too, CAN defeat depression!



Call 1.888.332.4141  
Text 1.888.312.4141  
For more information  
SEE PAGE 12 FOR LOCATIONS



**Bishop Edir Macedo**



### A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

**G**od devised a plan for each one of our lives, with highly privileged qualities that cover six essential areas in our lives:

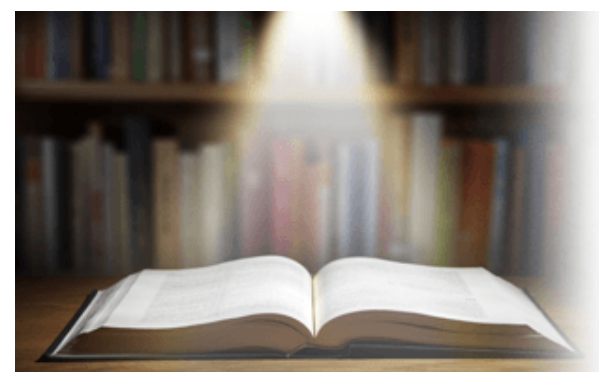
**SPIRITUAL** - it means new birth, baptism with the Holy Spirit, and salvation.  
**HEALTH** - a healthy, well-nourished body.  
**CAREER** - no matter the profession, a successful outcome is inevitable.  
**FINANCES** - besides being "blessed without measure," which means blessings without interruptions, having the wisdom to manage what you achieve.  
**LOVE LIFE** - find the "grace of the Lord," the right person to love, be loved, and live with for the rest of your life while serving God.  
**FAMILY** - build a united family whose members have the same Spirit, faith, and spiritual goals so your home can be a little piece of Heaven.

To take possession of this quality of life, we need to do two indispensable things that require SACRIFICE:

First - let go of sin. We need to eliminate it from our relationship with the Almighty. "... For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?" 2 Corinthians 6.14

**"If you wish to have this quality of life, follow this path and stick with God."**

Second - put aside "everything" and "everyone" who are consciously or unconsciously occupying the "throne" at the core of our being, which



was prepared since our birth exclusively for the Lord Jesus to take the wheel and direct our life. This space is His and His alone. Remove EVERYTHING that can cause us to be emotionally attached, like a car, house, land, or money (material things). Remove EVERYONE we can emotionally tie ourselves to, such as children, husband, wife, father, mother, boyfriend, girlfriend, etc.

If you wish to have this quality of life, which we may call "the Kingdom of God," follow this path and stick with God.

"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high because he has known My name." Psalms 91.14

"For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Habakkuk 2.3. God bless you!



"I don't have a time in my childhood when my mother spoke calmly. Her deep bellow of rage towards me is all I'd ever known. If I told the truth, I would get beaten; if I lied, it would be worse. She would make me do all the chores in the house, while my other siblings didn't lift a finger. I grew up thinking my mother hated me. For this reason, I kept a lot of resentment inside. My words were never pleasant, and I'd fight anyone who looked daggers at me. I was like a bull that saw red and reacted by starting a fight or throwing anything within my reach at anyone."

"When Joseph caught my attention, I saw him as a ticket out of my mother's house! I always walked past his place on my way to school. It wasn't long before we formed a friendship and later got into a re-

### OLD WOUNDS ROBBED 6 YEARS OF MY MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

lationship, then rushed to tie the knot."

"One year into our marriage, it was already a living nightmare. My anger was so out of control that I drove my motorcycle into another girl. We went on to have four children, but I still wasn't content. I wasn't working, and instead of asking my husband for money, I would go behind his back and take out loans for thousands of dollars to spend on expensive clothes and trips, hoping it would comfort me, but the joy was only momentary. I even sought help from witch doctors, but nothing worked. I didn't know what to do; I wanted to end it all. I had planned to kill myself by jumping from my apartment building, but I couldn't do it for my children's sake."

"My daughter told me about the Universal Church, and I decided to attend with her. I got fed up with the way my life was, so I put

all my strength into having a fresh start. I participated in the services and made my chain of prayer. I also put into practice what I had learned. I would read the Bible daily, and little by little, I noticed I was dealing with my husband and the situations at home differently. I was calmer and more in control of my emotions. The difference in me brought about the difference in him and my family! We communicated instead of yelling at each other. I also learned to forgive those who hurt me in the past and move forward."

"Today, I am no longer a ticking time bomb nor depend on alcohol. I am a completely different person. We have been married for 30 years, and our relationship has completely changed. We are closer than ever! Today, there is respect and understanding, and best of all, I've found the inner peace that was missing for so many years."

**Lina Mercado**



# DIVINE WATER

## “HE OVERCAME CANCER”

Marcelo saw an unexpected and stressful turn when he received a severe diagnosis: bowel cancer. However, he never gave up faith that he could be cured.

Along his recovery journey, Marcelo underwent several chemotherapy sessions and surgical procedures. Unfortunately, one of these procedures triggered severe complications, including infections, leading to a period of hospitalization that lasted 35 days, with four of them in the ICU.

At this point, Marcelo's wife combined medicine with her faith. She started attending the services and prayers at the Universal Church. After much perseverance and determination, a real miracle happened, and Marcelo now enjoys his health wholly restored.



## “FREE FROM PAINS AND SLEEPLESS NIGHTS”

It started after a terrible accident in 2013. I began to feel uncomfortable with pains in the middle of the night, which caused me sleepless nights. I would sleep just one hour; I developed depression and had to take medicines for about five years. This situation lasted for about six years.

A friend of mine invited me to attend the Universal Church. When I came, I felt excellent and relieved. By Drinking the Divine water by faith, today I'm healed. I need no more medications to sleep. I have no more pains in the night!! -Angela



Learn to apply your faith in order to face your challenges!

**GET YOUR DIVINE WATER  
EVERY SUNDAY**

at your nearest Universal Church

If you have received a challenging diagnosis, exercise your faith.

\*The Universal Church warns that you should never ignore medical treatment.\*





|Message|

**BISHOP JOSHUA**

## COME INTO THE ARK



Any parent feels happy when their child obeys them. And in the same way, any parent feels upset when the child disobeys them. If you promise your child that if they complete a task, you will reward them as long as they follow through and do what you instructed, you will be happy to reward them as you promised.

It is what happened with Noah. God decided to destroy the world and start over because it had become too corrupt. But Noah and his family were not like the rest of the people of the earth, especially Noah. Noah was a man who obeyed God. He followed to the point that he was the only one (along with his family) that God saved when He destroyed the earth with the flood.

Noah was willing to sacrifice and follow God's instructions to a tee. He offered nearly 100 years of building the ark to save himself and his family. Look how far he was willing to go for his family!

After God saw his obedience and willingness to sacrifice, God spoke these words to him;

**Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation."**

**Genesis 7:1**

"Come into the ark" meant "join Me inside." God did not say, "Go into the ark...;" He said, "Come in..." which means He was already inside.

When a person obeys God one hundred percent, no matter how much it costs or what He asks of them, He will be with them and their family and save them from the "floods" of the earth. But the requirement is obedience and sacrifice. That's what saved Noah.

May the God of the Bible bless you.

October 2023 Bible Reading						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Galatians 1 ✓	Galatians 2 ✓	Galatians 3 ✓	Galatians 4 ✓	Galatians 5 ✓	Galatians 6	Ephesians 1
Ephesians 2	Ephesians 3	Ephesians 4	Ephesians 5	Ephesians 6	Philippians 1	Philippians 2
Philippians 3	Philippians 4	Colossians 1	Colossians 2	Colossians 3	Colossians 4	1 Thessalonians 1
1 Thessalonians 2	1 Thessalonians 3	1 Thessalonians 4	1 Thessalonians 5	2 Thessalonians 1	2 Thessalonians 2	2 Thessalonians 3
Titus 1	Titus 2	Titus 3				

## OVERCOMING FAMILY PROBLEMS

**Who doesn't want the best for themselves and their family? The family is precious and created by God, and its members must be united. A strengthened family, guided by Him, is a great blessing. Not all families are happy, but it is possible to change this situation.**

Housewife Rayla Lima, 29 years old, was one of the people who did not accept living in a destroyed home and fought to change the situation.

Dione and I had been together for 12 years but didn't have a happy life. I was always the last to know about his decisions; we had no dialogue, and he prioritized friends over family. Because of that, we fought a lot.

Having witnessed so many arguments, our eldest son, Jhonata, aged 12, became a reticent child. He was even afraid of sleeping alone. I started noticing these behavior changes and talked to my husband, but nothing changed.

We got separated for three months because we thought we couldn't do anything to change that situation. My sister-in-law saw our problems and invited us to the Universal Church. Besides the family

When my husband noticed my change, he accompanied me to the service.

"It was there that I understood the importance of becoming a son of God and, second, a good husband and father. We were not married; we were just together, but when we decided to obey God, we got married properly and received the blessing of the Altar," he says.

Today, we have built a happy family, we have all changed, and my son is free from the fear that he had. I know what it means to have a destroyed family. I could not allow this to happen again with my children, and I decided to act by faith and trust in God. As a result, the Lord cares for us. That is why I say it is imperative to have a family structured based on faith in the Almighty and my family in the ark of God.

Rayla



problems, I also had insomnia, and since I could not sleep, I stayed up to watch the Church programs on TV. After we got back together, I knew I could not change my marriage by myself, so I decided to go to the Universal Church. At first, I didn't see any changes. Until one service, I heard a word that was guidance from God for my life: 'How long will you continue in the same way and doing the same things? You say you'll change here, but you do everything the same when you get home!' That woke me up. I gave my life into God's hands that day and decided to change my behavior.

Do you want the same miracle in your family? Join us at a Universal Church near you on Thursday, October 12, for this extraordinary service for the family.

The fact that God ordered Noah to enter the ark with his family means that, after God, nothing in this world has more value to us than our family, and we want to save our family. So, God feels compassion for our unbelieving family members and wants to save them through us, too.



# SUNDAY GATHERING OF FAITH AND MIRACLES IN HARLEM, NY

## AMC MAGIC JOHNSON THEATER



Sunday, September 24, 2023 - Crusade of Faith and Miracles with 70 Disciples

The Universal Church in Harlem held its Sunday Great Gathering of Faith and Miracles at AMC Magic Johnson Theater in New York.

Bishop Joshua opened the service, noting that the venue was just a building, but the attendees were the ones that make up the church. Our body is the Temple of our Lord Jesus; as such, we cannot be in suffering or pain, although this life is full of problems and troubles. The Lord Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28



### Water Testimony

**Ms. Shelly Ann Brown** testified that she was diagnosed with foot problems and bunions, which caused a lot of pain in her foot. Sometimes, her foot would become swollen, elevating her blood pressure to hypertensive levels. In addition, on rainy days like Sunday, she would be in excruciating pain. Her physician told her she would have surgery to correct the foot problem. Ms. Brown decided to forgo the surgery and instead began to drink the "Blessed water" three (3) times a day and pray. Today, she no longer experiences foot pain and does not need surgery.



**Ms. Anna Macon** stated that she began attending the Universal Church after her grandmother passed away because she felt a little lost. She felt

like she was missing something. She noted that she was also very closed off from people and anxious. She began drinking the "Blessed water" and praying. Today, she is at peace. She is also more open to people than before.



**Ms. Jennifer Johnson** stated that before attending the Universal Church, she was an alcoholic and drug addict for twelve (12) years. She underwent inpatient treatment and went to rehab for two (2) years, and upon exiting the program, she relapsed. The relapse led to her being hospitalized and arrested for assaulting someone. Still, she could not recall because she "blacked out." She began attending the church and started drinking the "Blessed water," and now no longer has any cravings for alcohol or drugs and has been baptized in water.



**Ms. Lola Sinclair** stated that she suffered from depression for two (2) years before attending the church. She was unable to sleep and would often cry in her sleep. She felt tired and drained. By attending the church services, drinking the "Blessed water," and praying, she is now free of depression and can now sleep.



Bishop Joshua instructed the attendees on how to use the "Blessed water" by advising them to drink three (3) sips of the water daily in the name

of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He then prayed for all the attendees who had cancer, diabetes, infirmities, bone problems, organs, lumps, infection, memory loss, and addiction/s. He declared their healing and instructed them to claim it: "By Jesus' stripes, I am healed."



### Psalms 91 (Protection) – October 12, 2023 – Secret Place of the Most High

Bishop Joshua asserted that we will be praying for the family's protection for the next three Sundays (including Sunday past). He stated that familial bonds are under attack, and there is a lot of strife, separation, and division within families. Bishop Joshua emphasized that our family is our greatest asset after receiving our salvation, so we have to work to strengthen our familial bonds and keep our families safe from the turmoil of this world. He and the 70 disciples then blessed and consecrated the Prayer Cloths that the attendees would receive to intercede on behalf of their families on the following Sundays. Bishop stated that on Thursday, October 12, 2023, there will be a great cry of faith on behalf of the families.



### New Attendees

**Ms. Yolanda Cooper and Karimah**

**Hendricks** were invited to the service by a member (Ms. Sandra) who had seen them sitting on the ground in distress on Friday and did not overlook her. She saw them in despair and invited them to the event on Sunday at the Magic Johnson Theater. Ms. Hendricks believed she got that invitation because God knew she needed to attend the event that day. She noted that she could already feel that the Holy Spirit was there upon entering the venue today. She left the service with the message, "God is real and not make-believe."



**Ms. Audry** was invited to today's event by her niece, Ms. Jacqueline Foster, a church member. She enjoyed the service and left with the message that she needed to separate herself from things that were not good. Also, she needs to be the sheep, not the goat, to have our Lord Jesus as her Shepherd.



**Ms. Valarie and her daughter Mya** were evangelized on the street and invited to this event. They live in the neighborhood, received books from the church, and decided to visit the event today. They left the service with a sense of peace.







## "MY FAMILY UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY."

Having your family in the same faith is a blessing and a pleasure, one that you can determine and speak into existence by affirming your family's unity. At the Universal Church, we believe true unity comes from assurance and a close relationship with God. If we invest in our faith, we can invest in our family; by doing this, we can become spiritually united with our loved ones.

We often fight, argue, and fall out with our family. But forget that there is tranquillity with God and peace in prayer. God can bring families together if they begin by coming to Him. When problems arise, finding a solution should be the first point of call, and when a family comes together in the same faith, solutions can be seen as a team. Bring your family this Thursday, October 12th to the Universal Church, where a blessing and a prayer will be made for them. Praying together is powerful. The force in this togetherness is a huge source of strength. Come and find this strength with us at the Universal Church.



## "I lost my job and started having thoughts of death. That's when I decided to go home."

for attention on the streets that he didn't give me. I would go out dancing, and the pleasure I felt at that moment would disappear the next day. I would return to a destroyed reality," she recalls.

Roberta decided to leave home to have another relationship. The children didn't know what to do without their mother's presence. Her husband, Luis Santos, who is the same age as her, already knew about the Universal Church and decided to attend meetings to seek direction. He always took

his children Yasmin and Luis Carlos with him.

Yasmin, 13 years old at the time, understood that she could have her own family transformed through faith. She cared for her brother and father and was convinced God would change that situation. Yasmin persevered in resolutions and prayers.

Meanwhile, Luis awakened to faith. He changed his wrong attitude. It didn't take long for Roberta to

return home. "I lost my job and started having thoughts of death. That's when I decided to go home. I sought God with them, with all the strength I had left."

They freed themselves from destructive thoughts and feelings. They forgave each other and decided to rebuild their marriage. Today, the family is united in the same faith. Everyone serves God.

**R**oberta Santos suffered as a child from a dysfunctional family. Her parents had a problematic marriage and separated when she was six. This left her with a lot of trauma and conflict.

At the age of 15, Roberta began to experience her own dramas. She had several troubled relationships until she became pregnant with her boyfriend and moved in with him. "I was pregnant,

and my boyfriend rejected me as a woman. He went out a lot and only came back late at night. I didn't accept that situation. The result of this was constant fights," she says.

Despite the betrayals and disagreements, the couple decided to make their union official. After that, they had one more child. The situation only worsened as financial problems arose, increasing friction between the two. "I started looking

**They freed themselves from destructive thoughts and feelings. They forgave each other and decided to rebuild their marriage. Today, the family is united in the same faith. Everyone serves God.**





Erica says that she experienced rejection from an early age: her mother left her at the hospital shortly after giving birth, and from there, she was taken to an orphanage. Erica remembers being a sad child without understanding why her mother didn't want her. She passed through several homes as a child and suffered physical attacks and abuse. "My dream was to have a family, a mother, to have this warmth, this affection," she says.

When she became an adult, Erica showed herself to be a strong person to try to protect herself, but bitterness and loneliness gnawed at her. "Only I know how often I cried when I put my head on the pillow. Loneliness is horrible," she says. Thinking it would end her suffering, she attempted suicide twice.

That's when she arrived at the Universal Church. Participating in some

church meetings, she heard about the Love Therapy lectures. Still, she resisted participating because she no longer believed in love. She revived her old dream when given a chance: "Before I didn't love myself and in the lectures, I began to heal and enjoy, life began to shine."

**"Only I know how often I cried when I put my head on the pillow. Loneliness is horrible."**

José Adilson also found inner healing in Love Therapy. He, raised by adoptive parents and had a difficult childhood, says he couldn't wait until he turned 18 to leave home. When that age finally arrived, he met a young woman who he

began dating and married. Together, they had children, but the relationship ended after 20 years of a troubled marriage. "I felt like the worst man in the world, a garbage man, and I was depressed for many years. I tried to commit suicide twice," he says. He arrived at the meetings in this condition: "I started to learn about intelligent love, and I started to change."

Erica and José Adilson participated in Love Therapy, dated for nine months, and married this year. "It was the happiest day of my life. I couldn't hold back my excitement when the doors opened, and she entered the church. Our marriage is a little piece of heaven", says José Adilson. Erica adds: "I lived alone for a long time, but I guarantee it is much better to have someone by your side."

### MY FAMILY UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY

HE WHO DWELLS IN THE SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH SHALL ABIDE UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress: My God, in Him I will trust." Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day, Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noon day. A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand; But it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look, And see the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place, NO EVIL SHALL BEFALL YOU, NOR SHALL ANY PLAGUE COME NEAR YOUR DWELLING. For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot. "Because He has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on an high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, And show him My salvation."

PSALM 91



**You will receive a free handkerchief of Psalm 91 for your family's divine protection. Thursday, October 12th**  
**Call this number to reserve yours:**  
**1 (888) 332-4141**  
**See the back page for your local Universal Church.**

## MAKE A CHAIN OF PRAYER IT WORKS!

A Chain of Prayer is when you attend a prayer meeting for a certain number of weeks without interruption in order to see a breakthrough in your life. Whether it is healing, a financial breakthrough or spiritual deliverance that you need, a Chain of Prayer helps you develop the faith and determination to overcome.

**Monday - Strong Nation**  
**7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm**



Learn the secrets to overcome financially. Receive direction to grow and become a successful person.



**Tuesday - Prayer for healing**  
**7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm**

Receive prayers for your physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

**Wednesday - Night of Salvation**  
**7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm**



A meeting will be held for those who want to invest in a genuine relationship with God.



**Thursday - Family & Love Therapy**  
**7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm**

The goal of the family meeting is to bring families together. No family is perfect, but they can be free from any hate, separation and other underlying issues.

**Friday - Deliverance**  
**7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm**



There is a root to every problem. No issue can be dealt with permanently without removing its root. Every Friday, strong prayers is provided for anyone who is facing a problem that is influenced by negativity.



**Saturday - Impossible Cases**  
**8am & 12pm**

Have you ever looked at a problem or situation and thought, 'this is impossible, there is no solution to this?' If you want to see the 'impossible become possible', join us every Saturday.

**Sunday - Gathering of Faith & Miracles**  
**7am, 10am, 3pm & 6pm**



These meetings aim to help people connect with God, to empower people and teach them how to use their faith to achieve what they want in their lives.



# HOW CAN I GET CLOSER TO GOD?

As children, we quickly learned how to get things we wanted from our parents. They would even make ultimatums such as, "If you would like to go here, then you have to do this..." or "If you would like this toy, you must behave that way..." We soon learned that for our parents, good grades and behavior equals rewards.

The truth is that those things were our obligation. We benefit from getting good grades and having good behavior. Our parents cared for us, provided for us, wanted the best for us, and only asked for our obedience in return..

Perhaps you think to yourself that this wasn't your case. The picture-perfect family unit is not what you grew up with, but you have Someone who cares for you. God, your heavenly Father, does care and wants the best for you; however, He also needs obedience.

People often think, "God is not with me. Look at my life." Unfortunately, this is a common misunderstanding among people. For God to be with us, we must first be with Him. Just as in the example you read above, God wants to give the best to us, provide for us, and care for us, but He needs our obedience. When you are with God, He is with You.

"... The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you." II Chronicles 15:2

How can we be with God? Through obedience. God speaks to us through His Word. It shows us how we should serve Him and live for Him, and though it may not be accessible at times, we must remember that we are not alone. When God sees our effort to live according to His will, He takes care of us.

Maybe it has been hard for you to obey what God has asked you to do, and you have failed so much that you don't feel motivated to try. God hasn't given up on you. He is giving you another chance today. Get back on track. Obey God and reap the abundance He has in store for you.



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# UNIVERSAL BEYOND BARS

*YOU ARE NOT ALONE!*



**M**y name is Mr. DaSilva, and I am 37 years old. I grew up in a Christian home, but I was not happy. I felt very empty, and it kept getting worse as time passed. One side of our house was a witchcraft center; the sound of the drums and their clothing caught my attention. I started visiting there regularly until one day, they told me I had to get more involved.

When I experienced the first manifestation of a spirit in my body, I thought it was a completion moment. I thought I had found my purpose in life and said I could be used to help others. I started working in a witchcraft center, and we practiced supposed “cleansing” for people to be free from their burdens and bad things. This new path of mine gave me a momentary sense of fulfillment.

However, when I was alone, all the terrible feelings came back: depression, emptiness, uneasiness, etc. I “graduated” from the witchcraft center and became a head warlock. I was very young and had already gone through much suffering.

My health was failing because I also used a lot of drugs, and I drank like crazy. I only wanted to try and escape the hell I was living; I desired to dig a hole in the ground and crawl into it because I couldn’t suffer so much. It appeared that I had everything in the eyes of others, but within, I had nothing. One day, there was a disturbance near where I lived, which involved a murder.

*I was blamed for that murder and thrown into jail, and as if it wasn’t enough, I had no peace, and now I lost the one thing I had, which was my freedom.*

But inside that prison, I met a guy I knew on the streets, and he invited me to dabble in a game they played in jail, and worse, I got involved in crime. At this point, I created a makeshift witchcraft center inside

the prison; many would refer to me as a warlock, and I became known.

But one night, as many other nights, I was thinking to myself and crying; I was thinking of all the people in there thrown around like a bunch of animals, and I turned into an animal there as well because I lost feeling; I became cold, it was an emptiness inside of me. I even forgot the address of my own mother’s home. My mother was a Christian then and could not recognize who I became.



Whether she knew what was happening to me or not, I knew she was fighting for me, and she was attending the Universal Church. One day, I participated in a meeting in the prison, which happened to be the UBB. I was still a warlock and gang member, but inside of me that day, a prayer was made, and everything the pastor said hit me right between the eyes.

It hit me; I felt that when I was released and returned to the streets, I would be killed, but as I said, the hatred diminished through the pastor’s word. It touched my heart, and I took hold of it; I told myself, the God that this man is talking about, if He is honest,

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**ONE DAY, THERE WAS A DISTURBANCE NEAR WHERE I LIVED, WHICH INVOLVED A MURDER. I WAS BLAMED FOR THAT MURDER AND THROWN INTO JAIL, AND AS IF IT WASN’T ENOUGH, I HAD NO PEACE, AND NOW I LOST THE ONE THING I HAD, WHICH WAS MY FREEDOM.**

to hear me because I cannot bear this suffering anymore. But on that day, that pastor made a prayer for me, something I would never do before, but on this day, I could sleep in peace, something I hadn’t done in over ten years.

I slept peacefully, and it was in prison. I was eager and ready to receive another prayer from someone in the UBB. My mom was an assistant at the universal church, and we were writing to one another. I told her I was experiencing something new and promised to go to the Universal Church. However, the time passed, and it seemed as though I would never get out of prison, but I prayed to God, and shortly after that prayer, I got released.

I could see my family, whom I hadn’t seen for many years, and they realized that some people still loved me; my mother never stopped fighting for me and that my life had a future if I wanted it and fought for it. Time passed, and that day, I told my mom to let us go to church, and my mom was so happy. She said, “Let’s go, son.”

It took a weight off my shoulders when I stepped into the church. I went again the following day, but I decided to tell God, if You are genuine, hear me and help me because I do not know what to do with my life. If You don’t help me, I will die because I do not want to live anymore. I heard there was a God that could help me, and there was a power that could give me help. On Friday, I came to church with an open heart and received my

deliverance.

My process of freedom began, and I understood that what I needed to be happy was the holy spirit. I made many purposes with God and familiarized myself with God. I knew God did many things in me, but all I wanted was the joy of the Holy Spirit living in me. I didn’t want to know God by what others say but through my personal experience. I sought Him, and after this, I received and had the assurance that the Holy Spirit was inside of me. I now am complete, and I have the living God in me, the God who heard me and changed my life; I enjoy speaking to people about



the love I found through the Holy Spirit. I’m well in my profession. God restored all that I lost.

I married a woman of God, God’s mercy restored me, and He has brought me to life; I thank God for all He has done. I am living proof that there is a solution. All you need to do is believe and step closer to God.



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# "THE ODDS WERE NEVER IN MY FAVOR"

Alice Santos studied until the sixth grade. For most of her life, she believed she had a calling to be just an employee. Therefore, she was content to receive low wages and work to make other people's dreams come true. "I come from a low-income family and thought I should die poor. I believed I couldn't invest in anything because I didn't have any education or money. I limited myself for a long time. My boss had said that I was born to be an employee, and I believed it," she notes. With a young daughter, her salary was insufficient to cover all her expenses. To make matters worse, she got involved with drugs. "I used drugs, lived in someone else's house, and had a relationship with a drug dealer. When he died, I started committing petty theft. I dreamed of a happy life, but it seemed impossible."

Despite the critical situation, Alice was not forgotten. After receiving invitations from a brother and a co-worker, she arrived at The Universal Church. Only when I gave my life to God I noticed real changes," she says. Alice got a well-paying job and started making plans. Everything seemed to progress, but an intestinal illness hospitalized her for 45 days. "When I left the hospital, I made a purpose at Altar. I had nothing to lose. My health was already failing, and I owed rent. At the time, I sold perfumes and soaps because my only source of income was from the government, SSI (Supplemental Security Income)."

Alice made a bold decision she bought flour, chicken, and other ingredients and made chicken pies. "I received a lot of rejections. Some people looked at me, disgusted. I looked terrible; my teeth were broken, but I persisted. I offered the pies in a beauty salon, and a woman bought them all and ordered 20 more." She says that her vow at the Altar changed her life. "When I came down from the Altar, my vision opened. I got the key to a small snack shop within a few days. It was a small place with many leaks, but I saw a beginning. With the help of one person, I bought \$200 worth of goods and paid for everything in 15 days," she describes.










After facing poverty, drug addiction, and illness, Alice made a decision of faith and became a businesswoman. See what she did to change her story.

Alice clarifies that the main change happened inside of her. She reveals that she started to see herself as a winner and took action to achieve her dream of being a businesswoman. To do this, she began attending meetings of The Strong Nation. "I began to follow God's direction."

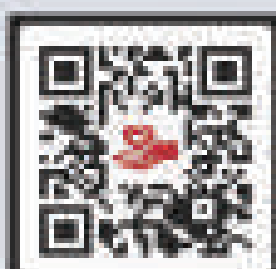
Every Monday, I receive new teachings and put them into practice," she says. Today, Alice is married and guarantees that she has never put limits on her dreams again. In July, she opened a new restaurant.

"My daughter is the manager at the first restaurant, and I manage the second. I'm unafraid to follow God's direction and I am not complacent."

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