THE CHURCH

OF THE

FIRSTBORN

DAN DUKE

SHUBERT PUBLISHING

COPYRIGHT

THE CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN

All rights to this edition reserved by Shubert Publishing

Proofreading: Lucimara Zanini Soares; Rita Moura

Layout: Rita Moura

Cover: Luciano do Nascimento

CONTENTS

Foreword	4
Chapter 1	5
Chapter 2	7
Chapter 3	9
Chapter 4	12
Chapter 5	15

FOREWORD

The Church of the Firstborn sheds light on a subject I have never heard any preacher teach on except the missionary Dan Duke. This little book, immense in its content, deals with the birthright. It is a right we receive through God's only begotten Son, who became the Firstborn among many brothers and made us joint heirs with Him of His firstborn inheritance. This inheritance includes our right to the priesthood, royalty, authority, a prophetic spirit, and the double portion.

Our firstborn inheritance is Satan's target. Our challenge is not to sell it or surrender it, whatever the offer may be.

Do you know your inheritance? What have you done with your inheritance? Are you standing firm in your place as a joint heir with Christ, determined to receive everything that is yours by right?

Let us learn from the missionary Dan Duke about the immeasurable value of our inheritance.

Shubert Publishing

CHAPTER 1

I would like to reveal a foundational truth concerning your future and eternal destiny. The Bible says that Jesus was the Father's Firstborn, the first to rise from the dead, and the Firstborn among many brothers. In Jewish tradition, the firstborn son received the birthright from his father. On certain occasions, it was the firstborn daughter. We will use the masculine gender to keep things simple. The principle is this: the firstborn received the birthright from his father, which was the inheritance. The firstborn inherited the wealth, the family name, and the inheritance handed down from generation to generation.

Hebrews 12:15 says: "Be careful that no one falls short of the grace of God, and that no root of bitterness springs up to trouble you and defile many through it." In the Old Testament, if a priest became defiled, he had to step away from his priestly duties for a period of purification.

We do not follow this literally in the New Testament, but it was an Old Testament principle. Verses 16 and 17 say: "Let no one be immoral or profane like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; he found no place for repentance, though he sought it with tears." The margin of my Bible says that he was rejected because he did not change his mind, and it continues: "You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that burns with fire, to darkness, gloom, and tempest" (verse 18).

Verse 18 is speaking of Mount Sinai, where the Law was given to Moses. God descended on Mount Sinai in fire, causing the whole mountain to tremble greatly. The Bible says that the scene was so frightening that even the people trembled with fear. The people did not want to, and could not, approach the mountain. The children of Israel were so frightened that they said to Moses: "We do not want to hear God's voice anymore. His voice is frightening. Let God speak to you, and then you can tell us what He says."

That was the place where the Law was given, but it is not the place to which we have been called. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews goes on to say in verse 22 that we are called to Mount Zion. Our calling is not to

the mountain of the Law, but to Mount Zion, the mountain of God's presence. According to the Scriptures, Zion is God's dwelling place (Psalm 132:13; the serious Bible student should also study the following verses: Psalm 26:8; 33:14; 68:5; 71:3; 89:14).

You are not called to live under the Law; you are called to a life in His presence. Isn't that wonderful? Aren't you glad that you have been called to live in His presence, that you can draw as close to the Lord as you desire and have as much of Him as you desire?

We have this right by inheritance. We will see more about this shortly. We read again in verse 22: "But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels in joyful assembly"; verse 23: "to the church of the firstborn, whose names are registered in heaven, to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect."

When you enter the Kingdom, you become part of the church: the Church of the Firstborn. It is very important that you understand this fact: Jesus is the Father's Firstborn, and you are an heir together with Him. This means that you are a joint heir in His birthright blessing.

In this book, I want to show you the five things that make up the birthright blessing. I also want to show you what you will lose if, like Esau, for any reason you defile your priesthood and forfeit your birthright blessing.

CHAPTER 2

Many Christians today are doing what Esau did: selling their birthright for the cheap price of sin. I do not believe this necessarily means that a person loses his salvation. Nor do I believe the issue is heaven and hell. I believe what is at stake is our inheritance; I also believe we can lose our inheritance without losing our salvation. Esau lost his birthright, but he remained in the family. I do not want to dwell on this issue; it is just a thought. I believe you must enter God's family and remain in it. What I want to emphasize, however, is this: what you can violate is your inheritance. What you risk losing is your birthright blessing. Everyone in the Church of the Firstborn is a joint heir with Jesus and shares in the Firstborn's inheritance, unless they willfully violate it, as Esau did.

There is a principle in the Scriptures that Christians need to understand. It is this: God sometimes passes over the natural firstborn to accept a spiritual firstborn. Here are some examples: God passed over Ishmael's birthright and accepted Isaac's, because Isaac was not the firstborn in the natural. He became the firstborn in the spiritual and received the inheritance. This is a pattern throughout Scripture. Cain, for example, was the firstborn. He lost his birthright, and it was given to Abel. Even though Abel was killed, he became the firstborn son in the spiritual. Esau, as we have just read, sold his birthright to his brother Jacob and later wanted to take it back. We read that he sought it with tears, but found no place for repentance.

We are living in a different time and dispensation from Esau, the dispensation of Grace, thank God! There is still a place for restoration and repentance. Those who seek it can still be restored to the place they lost.

Reuben was the firstborn, but he lost his birthright to Joseph. Do you remember the prodigal son's older brother in the New Testament? The one who had never sinned, who had done everything right? Do you remember how angry, bitter, and critical he became, refusing to take part in the feast prepared for his younger brother when he returned home? Well, he lost his birthright. He surrendered it to his younger brother, the prodigal son who had the good sense to come home.

Both had problems with their father, for different reasons, but both were prodigal sons. The older one was a religious, self-righteous prodigal. The other was a prodigal living in sin, but he was the one who returned and repented, and he inherited the blessing.

God even passed over natural Israel. Many people do not like to hear this truth, but that does not make it any less true. He passed over natural, political Israel in favor of spiritual Israel, the church. Everything God offered Israel, Israel rejected. He offered it through the hands of Moses, the mediator, and the people rejected it. Now He is offering the firstborn's inheritance to the church through the Mediator, Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 3

You may not be the firstborn in your family, but if you are a firstborn by the Spirit, you possess the birthright blessing. Five things are included in your birthright. Let us examine them:

The first part of the inheritance is the priesthood. The priesthood was passed from father to son. A person became a priest by inheritance. A high priest passed his office as high priest and his anointing to his son. The birthright was given to Levi. He inherited the priesthood, which became the Levitical Priestly Order.

The second is royalty. This inheritance was given to Judah. David, Jesus, and other kings came from the tribe of Judah. So Levi inherited the priesthood, while Judah inherited royalty in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, however, priesthood and royalty are included in the priesthood of Melchizedek. The Bible says that the Lord has made us kings and priests (Revelation 5:10). Royalty is therefore part of our birthright.

If you have remained in your place, kept your garments clean, and have not sold your birthright, then by inheritance you are a king and a priest. Your priesthood is after the order of Melchizedek, who was both king and priest.

Melchizedek appears in several places in the Scriptures, and his story is somewhat mysterious. Nevertheless, he represents an eternal priesthood intended for those who receive this birthright. The eternal priesthood is appointed for the Church of the Firstborn. The church is not a second option that God established because Israel failed. No! It was God's plan from the beginning, and the priesthood was also God's plan from the beginning.

Therefore, as a member of the Church of the Firstborn who is living uprightly, you have inherited a spiritual right as a priest unto God, the privilege bequeathed to the priest, and the ability to draw near to God as a priest.

You have also inherited royalty, which brings dignity, blessing, honor, and prosperity with it. There is no such thing as a poor king, not even in a

poor nation. This is where the teaching and the idea of blessing and prosperity are rooted. Royalty is part of your inheritance, unless you violate it. So, to be part of this Church of the Firstborn and to keep your inheritance intact, you must have a priesthood and royalty that have not been compromised, qualifying you to be a New Testament priest after the order of Melchizedek.

The third part of your inheritance is a prophetic spirit. The firstborn became the patriarch of the family. He took his father's place when his father died. It was the father's responsibility to give the patriarchal blessing. The Bible gives us several examples of this blessing. Jacob gathered his sons, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. This was the custom among the Jews at that time, and it still is. This was their inheritance. Whatever the father gave them in his blessing, they received. So the firstborn inherited this prophetic spirit in order to pass on to the next generation prophetic truth, prophetic blessings, callings, destinies, and a divine ability to proclaim God's goodness and blessings over the next generation.

This is what preaching and ministry should be: prophetic revelations spoken to God's children concerning their destiny in the Father. This word directs them, shapes them, and guides them to the place of destiny to which God has called them. A prophetic spirit possesses this power.

As for those who sell their birthright, we will not debate whether they are saved or lost. What they violate and risk losing is their position as king and priest, and their prophetic spirit, which is an ability not only to declare future blessings, but also to see the future. They are blind. They become people with only a single portion, living with just enough to survive, because the fourth part of the firstborn's inheritance is the double portion.

The double portion is included in this inheritance. Would you like to have a double portion of anointing? Everyone would. I have heard about the double portion for many years. I have had thousands of prayers prayed over me, hoping to receive the double portion, but I did not know how to obtain it until I discovered the truth. I discovered that the double portion is not obtained through the laying on of hands by a famous, anointed preacher. We receive the double portion by remaining in our place of inheritance and birthright blessing, and by not selling our inheritance.

The fifth element of our inheritance is spiritual authority: the authority to crush Satan's head. This promise was given to the firstborn. In fact, it was a prophetic word concerning the church. Therefore, if you are walking in your God-given position as an upright member of the Church of the Firstborn, you share the birthright blessing with Jesus. You exercise an eternal priesthood.

This changes everything about your worship. It changes the way you pray. Your prayers will become priestly intercession; you will stand in the gap between God and the people. God says: "I sought a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of this land" (Ezekiel 22:30). Your prayers will take on the character of intercession as you stand before God as a priest. You will stand with the dignity and honor of a king.

When you are aware of your position, you do not need to prove anything to anyone. You do not need to act according to protocol. You do not need to pretend to be something you are not. When you understand the blessing your Father has passed on to you, something happens inside you. This understanding adds something to your life that, first of all, cannot be faked or imitated. Either it is there or it is not. If you do not have this authority, you will not be able to convince anyone. But if this authority is in your life, you do not need to prove anything to anyone. It is not pride, arrogance, or selfishness. It is humility. It is receiving your birthright inheritance from your heavenly Father.

CHAPTER 4

There are two kinds of inheritance: one passed from the previous generation to the next, and another passed down from generation to generation. Everything God has done, everything He has given, everything the Lord has prepared, and everything spoken by the prophets has been accumulating from generation to generation. Now is the time for this divine and eternal inheritance to be given to this generation that is waiting on the Lord. This, dear reader, is powerful!

No wonder the demons go around offering bowls of lentils, as Jacob offered Esau. No wonder the demons offer sensual pleasures or illicit relationships. They know what they gain when someone sells his birthright. They know what they stand to gain because they know what you stand to lose. You have a priesthood to lose. This means you will no longer be able to stand before God in righteousness, holiness, and purity. You will not be able to stand in the gap in prayer and intercession and see God move on your behalf.

The measure of your prayer must be this: Is God moving? It does not depend on whether you know how to pray, whether you pray loudly or quietly, or on your ability. The measure is: Does my prayer move the hand of God? You may not know how to pray very well, but if God answers your prayers, that makes you a successful priest. No one may ever record your prayers in a beautiful book, but if God answers them, then you are someone who succeeds in prayer. The measure of your prayer is whether or not you receive an answer.

The demons know that when you violate your priesthood, you lose your prophetic spirit. How many Christians sell their birthright? Without a prophetic spirit, they are lost; they are blind! They go from place to place asking: "What is God doing? What is He saying?" They wander aimlessly, trying to hear God's voice. The prophet Amos prophesied about this when he said there would be a famine in the land, a famine of hearing the words of God (Amos 8:11). Those who have lost their birthright may go from east to west and everywhere else, trying to hear the word of the Lord, but they will not hear it because they have lost their prophetic spirit. They have lost

their ability to see and discern what God is doing. Why? Because they sold their birthright.

If they sell their birthright, they also violate their double portion. If you were the firstborn in your Hebrew family and your father laid his hands on your head, passing the firstborn's inheritance on to you, that would guarantee you a double portion of his entire inheritance. It would mean a double portion of the land, the resources, and all the family's possessions. If one of your brothers happened to lose his share and consequently became a slave, you, possessing your double portion, could be his redeemer and pay for his freedom, because you would have not only enough for yourself, but also enough for your family. You could buy back your brother's land and restore him. This is why we need a double portion.

A double-portion ministry is a ministry of restoration. It is a ministry that is sufficient for itself and for someone else. This applies in every dimension: enough faith, enough money, enough power, and enough grace for others besides yourself. When you possess a double portion, you can restore your brother. You can buy back his inheritance. You can stand before God and intercede for him.

As I said earlier, the fifth thing included in the firstborn's inheritance is spiritual authority. If you sell your birthright, you lose your authority to tread on the serpent's head. This means that casting out demons and engaging in spiritual warfare becomes a real struggle, which it does not actually need to be. Can you imagine a king in his own kingdom having difficulty with a rebellious slave? One word from the king is enough to stop the rebellion. All the king has to do is speak his word. He does not spend thirty-five years fighting a rebellious slave unless he has lost his authority. No matter how much you shout, declare, and fight against the devil, he can take one look at you and know whether or not you have sold your birthright. The devil knows whether you are standing firm in your double portion. He knows whether or not you are standing in your authority and royal priesthood, clothed in clean garments. We cannot fool Satan. If you are not living uprightly, he knows; but if you are, he knows that too.

You need to remain in the place to which you were called: not Mount Sinai, but Mount Zion. Likewise, you must remain in the place to which you were called: the Church of the Firstborn. You were called to stand in

the firstborn's inheritance as a king, a priest, a prophet, and a minister who possesses a double portion, and as a person who has spiritual authority. This is wonderful!

This must be the normal life of the church. A life of struggle, of being beaten up by the devil, is not the normal Christian life. It is not the normal life of Jesus. If it is not normal for Jesus, it should not be normal for you. Think about it. Are you getting the message? When you violate and sell your birthright, you may not be expelled from the family, but you certainly risk losing the most desirable thing in this earthly life: the Blessing and Inheritance of the Firstborn!

For the complacent and for those who have compromised with sin, for the backslidden and beaten down, I have good news: you can be restored! Esau could not be restored. Cain could not be restored. But you can be restored. In fact, in my view, natural Israel can only be restored when it turns to Jesus. I do not believe there is any distinction, any special gospel for the Jews. I love the Jews. I love Muslims, Hindus, communists; I love everyone. They are all the same. Everyone enters through the same door, by the same way: Jews, Gentiles, everyone. This is not antisemitism; it is being pro-Gospel. We are so timid nowadays that if you make an observation like this, suddenly you are labeled an antisemite, that is, someone who is against the Jews. I am not against the Jews; I am for Jesus! I had to be saved, and they need to be saved too. I had to come to Jesus, and they need to come to Jesus. He came to the Jews first, they said, "No, thank you," and you said, "Yes, thank you!" They will have their day, of course. We must make no distinction between Jews and Gentiles, because we are equal before God. The covenant people are the Church.

CHAPTER 5

What should you do with a message like this? I suggest you take inventory of your life and your present relationship with God. You need to understand what you are losing and what you are putting at stake through the little things that are so common, so easy to do, and just as easy to cover up. Even within our churches, worldly activities have been developing and taking root. Even "good churches" are full of sin, immorality, pornography... and you know the rest. You know all of this is true.

It may seem that we are getting away with this situation without any problem. It may seem that God is not dealing with or exposing this terrible reality. But the truth is that He has already dealt with this situation, because when you commit these sins and continue to persist in them, you put your birthright inheritance at stake.

When you need your double portion, it will no longer be there. When you need your spiritual authority, it will no longer be within your reach. When you want to worship God and be enveloped in His presence, you will not be able to. When you want to pray and intercede and see God move, you will not be able to pray and receive an answer. This is the penalty.

Does this mean you are going to hell? I do not know. Nor do I want to find out. I simply want to remain in my place; I want to stay in my position as a firstborn son, an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ!

For a moment, I want you to imagine with me a congregation of people who are standing firm in their position in the Church of the Firstborn. They are standing in the place to which they were called.

When these people gather, first of all, they gather as a kingdom of priests unto God. When the music begins and the people start to sing, the entire congregation raises their hands and lifts their voices as priests unto God, in a holy and meaningful place of spiritual priesthood. The worship will be so deep, so powerful, and so wonderful that the entire building will shake and the cloud of God will enter. The manifest presence of Jesus will enter the place where He is being worshiped. Then the place will be filled

with the presence of angels, and the priests will no longer be able to stand. This is what I call revival!

Why is this not happening today? The answer is simple: because we have a mixture in the priesthood. Many have sold their birthright and try to stand before God dressed in filthy garments. Their priesthood is defiled. There will be no cloud of His glory or His presence.

We are to blame because we have done this to ourselves. We can pray and fast, saying: "God, send revival! God, send revival!" God will not send revival until there is a Church of the Firstborn that will stand in holy worship, royal authority, a prophetic spirit, a double portion, and true spiritual authority.

The Scriptures declare: "Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, O everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in" (Psalm 24:7). If He is not coming in, it is because the gates are not being lifted up. When the gates are lifted up, I promise that He will come in! He is ready to come in. He has been ready for a long time. He will come in.

Now imagine with me a congregation, even a small congregation, standing in its birthright, not proud or arrogant, but standing with the dignity of kings and queens; not because they claim to be royalty, but because God says they are. These people simply had the good fortune to be born into the King's family. It was not their doing; they were simply born into the right family, but they received the dignity and honor due to them.

Then, standing in a holy priesthood, in a place of honor, possessing a prophetic spirit, which is keen vision, they can see the King on the horizon, coming toward them in His power and glory. They know what God is doing and are not carried back and forth by winds of doctrine and by the various "fashions" that sweep through the Body of Christ. They are not following this wave or that one, going here and there without direction. They have discernment because they possess a prophetic spirit. Their ears are attentive to the way, and they can hear the sound of His approach; they can hear the rumble of His chariot. They can hear. Readily, they begin to worship with honor, with a prophetic spirit, and with a double portion of anointing. This means that when there is a need, they can take action. When there is a demon, they can cast it out.

There will be a Church standing in a place of holy priesthood. People standing as kings who possess a prophetic spirit, a double portion, and true spiritual authority. This is my dream. A people is rising on the earth who will open the heavens, call for the fire, call for the rain, and release the winds: a people like Elijah! This people is rising! I declare it. This people is rising! Perhaps you may not be able to be part of this people, but perhaps your children can! What matters now is that this people is rising. You were called to be this church: the Church of the Firstborn. Do not sell your birthright for anything. It is the most valuable possession you have.

I want to leave you with this thought: There is still a chance! God's grace is still extended. The Bible says that we are living in the times of the Gentiles. This is what some people call the Dispensation of Grace. God's grace can be compared to the time of the tabernacle of David. The tabernacle of David, in those days, was the place where the ark of God's presence was open to the public; anyone could draw near to God's presence and enter into worship. However, it was a period that had a beginning and an end. The times of the Gentiles will also cease one day, and the dispensation of grace will give way to the eternal dispensation of glory. We will live in this place of glory in the Kingdom. Right now, however, there is a place for repentance.

If you have sold your birthright, I urge you to kneel down this very moment, wherever you are, and recover it. Ask God to give you back your birthright. This is precisely what the doctrine of repentance is: the ability to recover what you have lost. If you have sold your birthright, or if you think you have lost it, you need to settle your situation right now. You need to be restored, because your birthright is the most valuable possession you have.

OTHER TITLES PUBLISHED BY SHUBERT PUBLISHING

Bringing Light to the Law - Mark Shubert

In Christianity today, much has been said about returning to our "Jewish roots." Those who desire to please the Lord are often confused about the subject. Exactly how many of the Mosaic customs should we really keep? Should we observe the Sabbath? What about tithing? Is it for today? To rightly divide the Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15), today's Christian needs a clear understanding of the differences between the Old and New Testaments.

Complete Salvation - Mark Shubert

Biblical salvation goes far beyond simply receiving Jesus as Savior. The salvation of spirit, soul, and body constitutes complete salvation. Initial conversion is followed by a continuing process of conversion, the purpose of which is our complete salvation: to transform us fully until we bear the image and likeness of the Son of God.

Authority in the Kingdom of God - Mark Shubert

Through the sacrifice of Jesus, the Kingdom of God is being established on the earth once again. For those who accept God's rule, His order, and His authority, righteousness, peace, and joy are once again available. God reigns and has chosen to reveal His authority to us through authorities He has established. Submitting to God, to His Kingdom, and to His Government involves submission to God-appointed authorities. It is essential that every Christian know how to identify the sphere of authority God has delegated to him.

Names and Numbers - Dan Duke

The names of people and places have a very special meaning, as do the numbers described in biblical accounts. This book leads us to plunge into God's Word and enjoy the deep riches hidden in the meaning of names and in the revelations brought to light in episodes where certain numbers appear.

Anointing the Profane - Mark Hanby

Questions such as: What is the anointing, and where does it come from? How can I obtain it? How can I break the yokes over my life? What is sanctification? How can I experience revival? These are answered in this book as Mark Hanby helps us remove the veil so that we can understand spiritual authority and the anointing.

Developing Your Priesthood - Dr. Sam Sasser & Dr. Judson Cornwall

A profound and engaging book, Developing Your Priesthood makes us reexamine our understanding of praise and worship and, even more, of our place in worship, whether you are the pastor of a large or small church, a worship leader, a member of the congregation, a busy homemaker, a successful businessperson, or a student.

Every Christian is called to offer his sacrifice of praise to the Lord. This is our high and holy calling.

David and the Priestly Bread

There is a religious system that rejects those who desire Jesus above everything else. In David and the Priestly Bread, Dan Duke describes, eloquently yet simply, the difference between divine and human anointing; between the man who pursues his own ambitions and the man who seeks and loves Jesus above all things. He encourages us to look at the benefits we receive from this rejection rather than lament our losses.

Shubert Publishing is a partner of the Christian ministry Up Church - www.upchurch.com.br.

Find this and other products in our online store at www.shubert.com.br.