

What's happening at

From April 13th to April 20th at every Universal Church

# HOLY WEEK

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**The Strong Nation**  
 (Read on page 11 how Leda turned her life around)  
*"Deceiving people was just another shortcut —but my life only kept sinking further."*



# UNIVERSAL NEWS



SCAN ME

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# Evil Attacks

## Real or Myth?

Paranormal activity

Nothing goes right

Ongoing issues

Broken family

Depression

Addictions

Many people face daily difficulties without realizing that they are actually under spiritual attacks. These problems may be more than just life's challenges. Isn't it time to seek help? Read real life stories in this edition.



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**Bishop Edir Macedo**

The source of good and evil

**"My life was nothing but suffering."**

*Read more on page 6*



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## | IN THIS EDITION |

### Evil Attacks

Did you know that thousands of people fall victim to evil attacks without even realizing it? Whether you believe in them or not, these attacks are real and can affect anyone, regardless of their beliefs. Simply disbelieving them won't make their effects disappear.

Some forms of spiritual attacks include witchcraft, black magic, envy, insomnia, unexplained illnesses, night terrors, panic attacks, hearing voices, seeing shadows, constant failure, and persistent obstacles, among others. These issues often have a spiritual cause—a deeper, unseen root. In some cases, spiritual attacks can slowly and painfully destroy a person's life, and without the right help, the damage can seem impossible to undo.

But here's the good news: there is a way to break free from the grip of evil and overcome these attacks—with God's help. Prayer, fasting, complete devotion, and sincere faith in Jesus are some of the most powerful spiritual weapons we have to fight against evil forces.

That's why, every Friday at The Universal Church, we hold a special Deliverance and Spiritual Cleansing service. These gatherings teach you how to stand against the spiritual forces working against you and your family. If you recognize any of the issues mentioned above, we're here to help—completely free of charge. Join us at a branch near you for services at 7 AM, 10 AM, 4 PM, and especially at 7 PM.

## | BEATING DEPRESSION |

Depression is more than just feeling sad—it's a deep, overwhelming sorrow that weighs down the soul. It brings feelings of hopelessness, drains motivation, and makes even the simplest tasks feel impossible. In severe cases, it can even rob people of their will to live. Depression isn't just a state of mind—it's a sickness of the soul. But who can heal the soul? Only the Savior, the Lord Jesus, has the power to restore a troubled heart.

Every Sunday, The Universal Church opens its doors to those who are battling depression. If you need support, we invite you to visit a nearby branch. Join a Chain of Prayer—a seven-week commitment where you'll receive spiritual strength through powerful prayers, practical guidance, and one-on-one counseling.

You are not alone in this battle. Thousands around the world have found hope and transformation through faith, proving that a Chain of Prayer can truly make a difference. You can be the next success story. **You can overcome depression!**

**BEAT DEPRESSION**  
BEATING DEPRESSION THROUGH THE POWER OF FAITH!

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



**Bishop Edir Macedo**



### The Source of Good and Evil



**Whatever your problem is, it's source comes from evil. And there is only one way to overcome it: through an act of revolt and indignation.**

When we read the Bible with understanding and take time to meditate on it, we realize that it contains three voices: the Word of God, the word of the devil, and the word of man. This is why, in many biblical passages, we see people attributing suffering, disease, and misery to God—as if good and evil come from the same source.

However, we also find examples of people who used their faith with wisdom, refusing to accept the hardships they or others were facing.

Today, the same confusion persists. Many religions teach people to be patient in their suffering, to accept their struggles as fate, karma, or a trial they must endure. But Jesus clearly revealed the source of evil when He said:

**"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy." — John 10:10**  
And in the same verse, He revealed the source of good:  
**"I have come that they may have life, and that**

**they may have it more abundantly." — John 10:10**  
Not only that, but the Bible also says:  
**"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." — 1 John 3:8**

No matter what problem you are facing, its source is evil. And the only way to overcome it is through an act of faith, a revolt against that evil. This is what God revealed to His servants in the past—Abraham, Moses, Gideon—and He continues to reveal it today. He has already shown His power by giving His only Son.

Now, what are you willing to do? Are you ready to take action, to stand against all evil and declare: It's all or nothing, life or death? If so, join The Revolt at a UCKG near you.

**"And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding." — Jeremiah 3:15**



### "My suffering began with sorcery"

worse, my marriage began to crumble, leading to a divorce. Not long after, I lost both of my parents. I fell into deep depression and turned to alcohol, but even drinking couldn't ease my pain. Desperate and hopeless, I made plans to end my life—and take my daughters with me.

On top of everything, I started seeing dead people, hearing voices, and noticing shadows everywhere I went. I sought help from spiritualists and witches, but none of them could do anything for me.

When I was invited to The Universal Church, I saw it as my last hope. I walked in without any desire to contin-

ue living, but through God, I found comfort and a reason to hope again. My faith was renewed, and I believed that my situation could change if I committed to the deliverance service, which was happening at the time. I put all my strength into this purpose. Every Friday, I would use my faith and persevere in the spiritual deliverance meetings.

As I applied what I learned, the first miracle I experienced was the ability to sleep peacefully. The shadows, voices, and visions of dead people disappeared. My finances were restored. God's presence freed me from depression and addiction, protecting me from all evil."

— Soria

As if things couldn't get



# See what's happening on Sundays.



## “No more depression or back pain”

Last year, I was in a car accident that left me with a serious back injury. I couldn't walk, bend, or do anything on my own. The pain was unbearable, and not being able to do the things I once loved—like playing with my grandchildren or exercising—sent me into a deep depression.

When I went to the doctor, he prescribed medication for both my back pain and depression. But despite the treatment, I felt hopeless. I just wanted to stay in bed all day.

One morning, I woke up and watched the Showdown of Faith. That moment changed everything. I decided to start attending The Universal Church, where I took part in the Chain of Prayers. Today, I am completely healed! No more depression, no more back pain. I go out to the park, play with my grandchildren, and feel absolutely wonderful. — Martha



## “My faith helped me overcome cancer”



In February 2020, during a self-examination, 55-year-old Celia discovered a lump in her breast. She immediately sensed that something wasn't right. However, because of her faith in Jesus Christ, she chose to keep her thoughts focused on God, even as apprehension crept in.

"I went to the doctor and underwent several tests. As soon as he saw the results, he immediately referred me for a biopsy, emphasizing that the situation was serious and needed urgent attention," she recalls. The diagnosis was stage two breast cancer, which deeply saddened Celia. However, despite the storm of emotions that came with the news, her faith gave her confidence and strength.

"The moment I heard the diagnosis, I cried a lot. I couldn't understand why I was going through this, but I never questioned God. I simply prayed for the strength to endure everything and glorify His Name," she says. After a year of treatment, she never let go of her faith. "Today, I am completely free from cancer. The doctor called it luck, but I know it was my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that healed me."



## “Healed from migraines”

I suffered from severe migraines, and one day, the pain was so unbearable that I had to go to the emergency room because it affected my vision. I endured sleepless nights, feeling like I was losing my mind, suffering in silence. Then, I started drinking the Spiritual Treatment Water every Sunday with faith. Today, I sleep like a baby. The migraines are completely gone, and I no longer need any medication like I did before.



**RECEIVE THE HEALING WATERS THIS SUNDAY**  
at your nearest  
Universal Church





| MESSAGE |

Bishop Joshua

Free at Last



There are some things in life that we simply cannot change—like the color of our eyes, our age, or the events of yesterday. No matter how much we try, certain things remain beyond our control. However, there are areas of our lives where change is possible.

Perhaps you feel as though you've lost control over certain aspects of your life. Your family is falling apart, your health is deteriorating,

and your mind is constantly troubled. You wonder if things will ever get better. The answer is yes, and here's how:

**"Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." (John 8:36)**

What is it that you need

freedom from? What have you believed could never change, no matter how hard you tried? Today is your chance to break free—not just temporarily, but permanently. Imagine a life without depression, without endless financial struggles, without turmoil in your marriage or difficulties with your children. As you read this, you may be thinking about all the things you wished you could have changed but never realized you had the power to.

The truth is, it's not all on you. Surrender your burdens into God's hands, and allow Him to set you free. When He does, there will be no doubt—because you will be truly free.

May the God of the Bible bless you!

**Today is your opportunity to be free, not momentary but permanent freedom.**

MARCH 2025 BIBLE READING						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 AMOS 1
2 AMOS 2	3 AMOS 3	4 AMOS 4	5 AMOS 5	6 AMOS 6	7 AMOS 7	8 AMOS 8
9 AMOS 9	10 OBADIAH 1	11 JONAH 1	12 JONAH 2	13 JONAH 3	14 JONAH 4	15 MICAH 1
16 MICAH 2	17 MICAH 3	18 MICAH 4	19 MICAH 5	20 MICAH 6	21 MICAH 7	22 NAHUM 1
23 NAHUM 2	24 NAHUM 3	25 HABAKKUK 1	26 HABAKKUK 2	27 HABAKKUK 3	28 ZEPHANIAH 1	29 ZEPHANIAH 2
30 ZEPHANIAH 3	31 HAGGAI 1 & 2					

## I Worked for the Devil

My suffering began at the age of 8 when my father's business went bankrupt. Desperate for answers, a friend introduced him to a spiritualist who told him that the problem wasn't him or the company—it was me. Believing this, my father took me to the spiritualist, and from that moment on, I kept going back.

At 15, the spiritualist performed a ritual on me, locking me in a dark room for 21 days. During that time, all I did was eat and drink offerings dedicated to the spirits. That was the moment my mind was given over to them. I began making sacrifices in the woods, the sea, and waterfalls, believing that I was pleasing them.

As time passed, I became a witch doctor, and my life spiraled out of control. The spirits demanded even greater offerings—ones taken from cemeteries, crossroads, and places of death. I carried out rituals to block people's success, break marriages, bring ruin to businesses, and even cause death. Before going to cemeteries, I would seek out locations where people had recently died, trying to understand how they passed before using their names in rituals.

Things became unbearable. The spirits demanded blood, and when I had none to



addiction, drinking every day to the point where alcohol no longer had any effect. My health deteriorated, and I was diagnosed with hepatitis. My marriage, built on the same dark practices, crum-

bled, and I lost everything—my business, my properties, my happiness. I was living in an endless abyss, feeling empty and hopeless.

For years, I received invitations to attend the Universal Church, but I always refused. Eventually, to stop my friends from insisting, I

went just once. That day, I felt something different. I went back the next day, and then the next, until I was attending regularly. Within three months, my life was completely transformed. I let go of everything—the witchcraft, the addictions, the darkness—and surrendered myself fully to God. I was

baptized in water, leaving behind my old self, and sought the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Today, I am a new person. The Holy Spirit dwells within me, filling me with peace and true happiness. I am married to a woman of God, and together we dedicate our lives to serving Him. When the evil spirits controlled me, they only brought destruction and suffering. But now, with God's presence inside of me, I have peace and joy; my only desire is to share with others the same transformation that changed my life. Mr Milton



**When the evil spirits controlled me, they only brought destruction and suffering. But now, with God's presence inside of me, I have peace and joy...**



give, they wanted my own. The scars on my body are reminders of the times they took my blood. I was trapped in



# What's happening at the Universal Church

**"I didn't believe witchcraft existed—until my family and I lost everything"**



"At first, I was happy with my family. My husband was a hardworking man, and because of his efforts, my children and I never lacked anything. But there were people around us who envied our success, and out of that envy, they turned to witchcraft against us.

At the time, I didn't believe witchcraft existed and thought nothing of it. However, little by little, we started losing everything my husband had worked so hard to build. His workload decreased dramatically, and we reached a point where we had to sell our belongings just

to survive. Eventually, we even sold our home and began renting.

Despite all our efforts, things only got worse. There were times we couldn't even afford to pay rent on time. We struggled to put food on the table and couldn't cover our children's school expenses. On top of that, my daughter suddenly fell seriously ill. With all these problems weighing on us, my marriage also started to fall apart. My husband and I were both strong-willed, and we clashed constantly. Our relationship became strained, and eventually, he was unfaithful to me."

Many people think envy is just a feeling, but some let it consume them to the point of harming others through spiritual means. As Leticia's story shows, even if someone doesn't believe in witchcraft, its effects can still be real.

"I first came to The Universal Church through an invitation. Desperate for a solution, I decided to go. There, they guided us to attend the Deliverance Service on Fridays and commit to a Chain of Prayer. I had never read the Bible

before, but as I listened to the messages, I looked in the Word to see if what they taught was true. When I saw that it was, I obeyed."

As Leticia persevered, she began seeing changes—not only in her daughter's health, her marriage, and her husband's finances, but especially within herself. She also realized that true protection from all evil comes from receiving God's presence in her life.

"I sought the Holy Spirit because I didn't want to live in the past anymore. I began to believe that God had greater things in store for us. When I received His Spirit, I felt truly protected—like I had a shield in front of me. Since then, I've had the strength to face any challenge because I know He is with me."

Now, Leticia and her family continue moving forward, with God as the foundation of their home.

"When we truly seek Him, things begin to change. Nothing compares to what He can do."

— Leticia Portilla

**Every Friday, we hold a special Deliverance Service designed to help those facing spiritual oppression. In this meeting, you will receive powerful prayers and practical guidance on how to break free from all evil influences and protect yourself and your loved ones.**

**Don't wait any longer! Join us this Friday and take a step toward total freedom and the life transformation you've been seeking. Through faith, complete deliverance is possible!**

**Coming soon at every  
Universal Church nationwide**

**HOLY  
WEEK**

**From April 13th to April 20th**

In Biblical times, it was common for kings to make triumphal entries into a city. So, when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and the people of that city laid palm leaves before Him, they were receiving the Lord Jesus as their king.

"The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!" (John 12:12-13)

However, on Friday of that week, He was cru-

cified in the same place where He was received as King. The Lord Jesus already knew that this would happen but it was necessary for the sacrifice to occur because it was the only way to save us from hell.

Palm Sunday, the day in which Jesus entered Jerusalem, marks the beginning of the Holy Week. From then on, Jesus taught us valuable lessons through important actions which took place every day leading up to His death on the Cross and His resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Do you know the meaning behind some of the key events that occurred during that week,

such as Jesus' cleansing of the Temple, the anointing at Bethany or the washing of the disciples' feet?

We invite you to relive the steps of the Lord Jesus. Let's remember what He did for us in the most important week in human history!

To commemorate these events and learn more about what happened on this special week, join us at your local Universal Church every day from 'Palm Sunday', April 13th, until 'Easter Sunday', April 20th for the Holy Week. Every day of the week will be special.



It's nearly impossible to find someone who doesn't face difficulties in life. Challenges—big or small—come up at some point for everyone.

The real issue isn't the difficult situation itself but the fact that many people ignore where it comes from. Because hardships become so common, people start accepting them as just a part of life and stop recognizing their spiritual roots.

Many are suffering from the influence of evil without even realizing it. Problems like anxiety, insomnia, constant headaches, fainting spells, suicidal thoughts, mysterious illnesses that doctors can't explain, addictions, depression, fear, seeing shadows, or hearing voices—all of these can disturb a person's emotional state, causing pain and suffering not just for them but for those around them. These issues often have a spiritual cause.

For those who want to break free, the Universal Church offers deliverance services every Friday at all locations. Check the back for details on where to find a service near you.

Fernando describes his childhood as simple, yet filled with his family's love. At six years old, he had to move because the city's pollution was affecting his respiratory health.

Once his lungs recovered, the family returned to their home state, but that's when everything took a drastic turn. "I started using drugs and hanging out with the wrong crowd. I'd party and drink until I passed out. I had relationships with multiple women, and the so-called friends I surrounded myself with only led me further down the wrong path. I became short-tempered, impulsive, and explosive. My teenage years were turbulent—I was always getting into fights and trouble," he recalls.

Fernando says he heard voices, saw shadows, and had no peace. He tried to fill the emptiness inside with anything he could, but nothing worked. "I went through several failed relationships and was never happy in my love life. I got married, but I didn't respect my wife. I'd leave her alone at home while I went out drinking and using drugs with friends. We fought every single day. I verbally abused her and did



whatever I wanted without ever giving her an explanation. I was a terrible husband and a bad father."

His reckless lifestyle took a serious toll on his health. "Just when I thought things couldn't get worse, I was diagnosed with two tumors—one in my chest and another in my head. I couldn't handle the pressure. I developed psychiatric issues and ended up hospitalized."

Fernando became dependent on prescription drugs. "Without them, I'd lose control and destroy everything in sight. I was labeled a danger to society. I even carried a card stating that if I ever had a breakdown or hurt someone, I'd be taken straight back to the psychiatric clinic and committed," he says.

As if things weren't bad enough, he was involved in a car accident that left

him with a fractured spine and hip. "Doctors told me I'd be bedridden for life. They classified me as permanently disabled because I had lost 50% of my left hip function. I couldn't even move my leg on that side. After six months in bed, my leg weakened, and I developed cartilage problems. Every single day, I thought about ending my life."

The combination of physical, emotional, and spiritual struggles left him sleepless. One night, during a deep depression, he happened to

**He heard voices, saw shadows, and had no peace. He tried to fill the emptiness...**

watch a Universal Church program on TV. A pastor was preaching about the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37), explaining that if a person used faith, what was dead in their life could be restored.

**"My life was nothing but suffering."**

"I had nothing left to lose, and all I could think about was suicide. The doctors had given up on me, so I told myself, 'I'm going to the Universal Church. If nothing changes, that's it—I'll end my life because this is my last hope,'" he says.

At his very first service, he heard about the power of faith. Desperate for a way out, he committed himself to the chains of prayer and began his spiritual battle for deliverance. "I manifested evil spirits several times, and the pastors and church assistants closely guided me. The voices telling me to give up and the thoughts of suicide slowly faded. I was freed from my addictions, my suffering ended, and my health was fully restored," he emphasizes.

Surrendering at the Altar and allowing the Holy Spirit to work in his life gave him the strength to care for his broken body. With faith as his foundation, Fernando commanded his body to heal and rejected any return of his psychiatric struggles.

"Today, I have a healthy mind and live a normal life. Even my leg recovered. I'm now an athlete, practicing martial arts, and I live free from the chains of



my past. My marriage was restored—we live in harmony, and as a family, we seek God together.”

But of all his victories, Fernando says the greatest of them all was receiving the Holy

Spirit, which assures him he will never again be the out-of-control man he once was.

## "I heard a voice telling me that maybe I would find relief in that place."



**B**runa life was marked by profound suffering from a young age. At just four years old, she became a victim of sexual abuse, a trauma that continued until she was 13. This pain led her to experience deep despair and suicidal thoughts throughout her childhood. In a desperate moment, she attempted to take poison at home, but as she recounts, God's mercy intervened—the glass tipped over, spilling its contents.

“As a child, I couldn't sleep in the dark, I was constantly afraid, and I suffered from terrible nightmares. My mother would tell me that I often woke up screaming at night. This unhappiness lingered throughout my childhood, making it an extremely painful period,” Bruna recalls.

In an attempt to escape her suffering, she married at just 15 years old. A son was born from the relationship, but the marriage was filled with turmoil. “I wasn't at peace with myself, and because of my depression, I blamed him,” she admits. The marriage ended when she was 17.

After the separation, she engaged in multiple relationships, but each one left her feeling empty and ashamed. She developed a habit of taking frequent showers in an attempt to cleanse herself of these feelings.

“I didn't consider the consequences of my actions. I threw myself into a world of parties and drinking, trying to fill the void I felt inside,” she says. This cycle continued for two years until she met Rodrigo. Unlike others before him, Rodrigo treated her with kindness, which helped her step away from some of her self-destructive behaviors.

The two got married, but their relationship was unstable, marked by repeated separations and reconciliations. Bruna continued to battle inner turmoil, suffering from panic attacks and multiple suicide attempts, including an attempt to hang herself with a

bedsheet.

One day, under the pretense of needing fresh air, she asked Rodrigo to take her to a bridge. However, her true intention was far more tragic. “I planned to disappear. The idea was already formed in my mind. When we got there, I heard a voice telling me that maybe I would find relief in that place. I tried to throw myself off the bridge, but Rodrigo caught me just in time, preventing us from falling.”

“I had sleepless nights, I couldn't be alone, I suffered from panic attacks, and I was constantly obsessed with death,” she confesses.

Her transformation began when Rodrigo, who was familiar with the Universal Church, urged her to seek help from God. In a desperate effort to persuade her, he told her that if she refused, he would have her committed to a psychiatric clinic. Out of fear, she agreed to attend a meeting.

Within a month, she was able to stop taking the antidepressants she had relied on for years. As she continued her journey, she began to experience true relief and peace. “I started using the consecrated water and followed all the guidance from the Altar with determination and faith. As I applied these teachings, I saw real, tangible results. I began to sleep peacefully, gained the strength to attend Universal meetings, and felt an overwhelming joy,” she shares.

The turning point came when she received the Holy Spirit. “The first thing I heard was God's voice saying, ‘My daughter.’ It was so magnificent, so glorious, that I will never forget that gentle voice. In that moment, I experienced an immense transformation—because before receiving the Holy Spirit, we were merely God's creation. But with Him, I became His child,” she concludes.

## 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.





I'm going to the TOP, down with the UBB! Stay locked in for DAILY videos from the UBB.

## Be careful with the offers of the devil!

“But Abram said to the king of Sodom, ‘I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth, that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’” (Genesis 14:22-23 NKJV)

How does this apply to your life? Imagine this verse written with your name: “But I, (your name), raise my hands to the Lord to praise Him, that I will not get involved in explicit behavior, drug deals, fights, stealing, or take advantage of another inmate for my own benefit. So no one can say that I ruined my time here.”

Satan knows who truly belongs to God. Those who fear and respect the Lord will always reject his temptations. But the devil is deceptive—he looks for small compromises in faith to create bigger openings for sin.

This is exactly what he attempted with Abraham, but Abraham refused even the smallest gift from the king of Sodom because he knew it would be the start of a corrupt alliance.

Likewise, we must be alert and reject every offer from the enemy.

Watch out for these traps:

**A “white” lie** – You start a rumor, but when confronted, you deny it instead of telling the truth.

**A lingering look** – You justify it by saying, “It’s been a while; God will understand.”

**A shady deal** – You know contraband is wrong but still get caught up in it, then feel angry about the consequences.

**A half-truth** – Saying you did something (like submitting a request form) when you actually forgot.

**The wrong crowd** – You know certain people always cause trouble, yet you keep hanging around them.

How to stay strong:

**Stay Vigilant** – “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.” (Matthew 26:41)

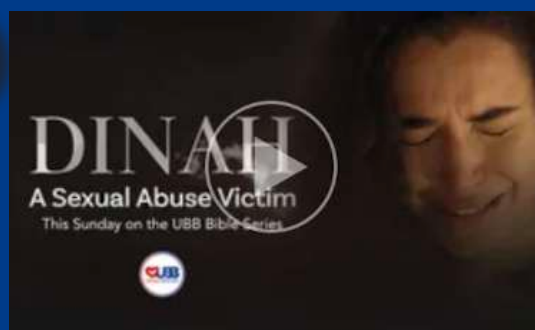
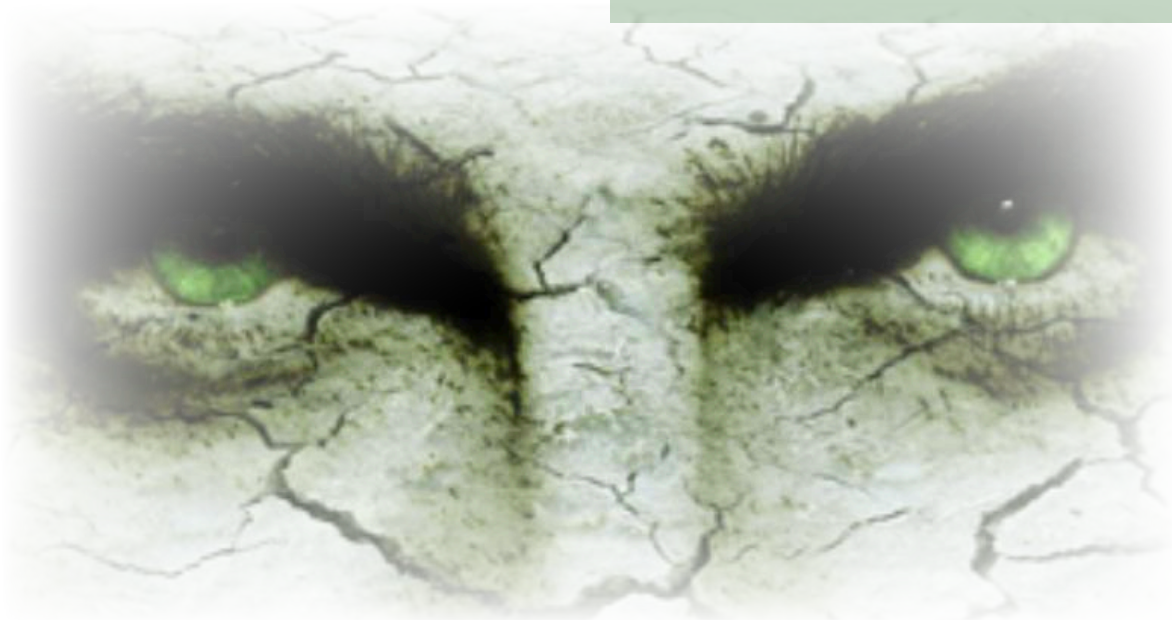
**Recognize Weaknesses** – Don’t allow the flesh to lead you astray.

**Seek Accountability** – Surround yourself with those who strengthen your faith.

**Reject Sin Completely** – Just like Abraham, refuse even the smallest compromise.

Satan only needs one small crack to open a floodgate of sin. Shut the door. Stand firm. Choose God.

“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”  
(Matthew 26:41 NKJV)



Every day the UBB has a new episode for you.

There is something for everyone! Do you need guidance about your faith, family, sexual orientation, curses, dealing with loss, addictions etc.?

“¿Hablas español? En la aplicación de Pando puedes encontrar segmentos de la UBB ¡también en español!”



# UNIVERSAL BEYOND BARS

*You are NOT alone!*



## “Drugs became my everything.”

I suffered from sleep paralysis, just one of the many problems in my life. I would feel awake but completely paralyzed, unable to cry out for help. But that was only the beginning. I also faced prison time, a consequence of the choices I had made.

As a young boy, I attended The Universal Church, but I never truly participated. I drifted away, fell into the wrong crowd, and by the time I was 15-16 years old, I was already addicted to drugs, including cocaine. By 17-18, I had started smoking cigarettes and got deeply involved in drug trafficking, using hallucinogenic substances regularly. My family knew about my actions but was too afraid to confront me.

**I was the “black sheep”—an outsider in my own home.**



**Emerson using drugs**

I lost all love for my family and began selling drugs to fuel my addiction. Eventually, I became a direct

trafficker, feared by many. My aggressive and reckless behavior made me a target for the police. Sleep became impossible, not just because of sleep paralysis, but because I lived in constant fear of



getting caught. I often wondered if I could ever escape this life. One day, during a routine drug deal, I was unaware that the police were watching. A friend tried to warn me, but before I could react, officers stormed in. Many were arrested, and I found myself face-to-face with an officer who told me, “You’re done.” Despite the situation, I was unmoved. I had prayed before, but I wasn’t ready to change.

In prison, I attended Universal Beyond Bars services, where pastors and volunteers tried to encourage us. But even then, I refused to let go of my criminal ways. Still, I made a promise to God: If He truly spoke to me while I was in there, I would serve Him.

When I was released, nothing changed—I went right back to my old ways. But then, I hit a breaking point. A particularly severe drug experience left me hallucinating, unable to move. I collapsed to the floor and, in desperation, prayed for God’s help. I cried out, promising that if He rescued me,

I would walk into the first church I found.

When I finally came to my senses, I returned home—still high, still weak. But when my daughter greeted me with love, something clicked. I realized the pain my choices had caused.

I knew I had to change. My daughter was growing up, and I wanted to be a better father. An assistant from The Universal Church invited me back, and this time, I accepted. I felt God’s presence like never before. I started attending services faithfully, left the party scene, and quit drugs completely. Through counseling and prayer, I committed myself to God. I told Him, “It’s all or all.” I knew that if I did my part, He would do His. I participated in the Daniel Fast, determined to be free—not just from addiction, but from negative thoughts and spiritual battles.

Finally, I was ready to receive the Holy Spirit. Today, I am completely free. No more sleep paralysis, drugs, or destructive lifestyle. I have a successful career, my own house, my own business, and a heart full of peace. The desire for drugs, crime, and darkness is completely gone—I don’t even want to smell it. Now, instead of representing danger, I represent God’s light. People are amazed at the transformation in my life. I am living proof that God’s power can change anyone.

**Emerson sharing his testimony**



*“I cry out to God; yes, I shout. Oh, that God would listen to me! When I was in deep trouble, I searched for the Lord.” Psalms 77:1-2*

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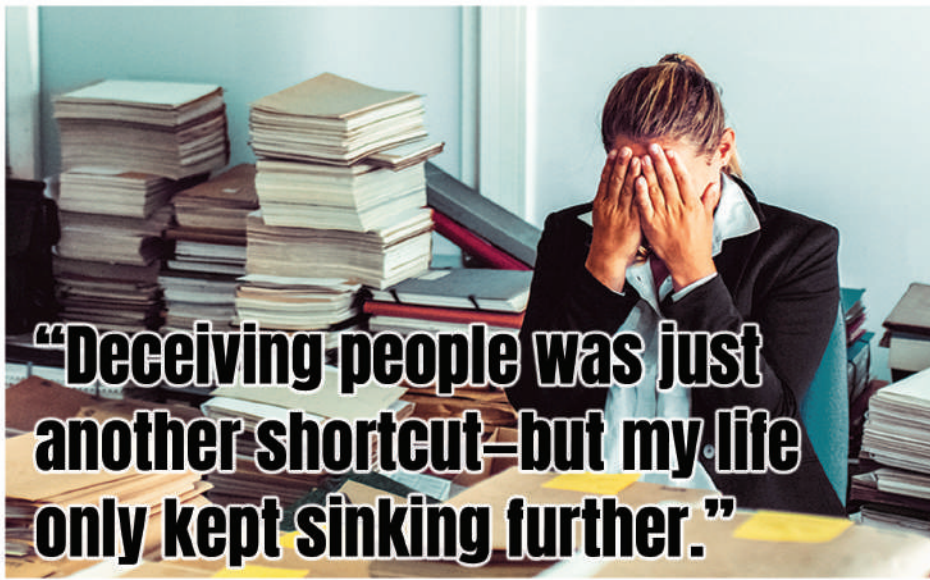


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**“Deceiving people was just another shortcut—but my life only kept sinking further.”**

I worked hard but saw no results because I was doing everything on my own strength. I lied to get what I wanted, thinking I was winning, but I was actually living a life of suffering. I did things the wrong way and thought I was getting ahead.” For many years, this was the reality of Leda, a 49-year-old HR analyst and businesswoman. At 20, Leda became a single mother. Determined to succeed, she pushed herself relentlessly, but no matter how hard she worked, she always struggled. Looking back, she realized the problem: she believed that even with bad choices, she could still end up in a good place.

But life proved her wrong. “My life was full of failure and humiliation. My credit was ruined, I was renting a place I could barely afford, and my income never covered my expenses. I couldn’t keep a steady job and lost everything I worked for. At one point, I was three months behind on rent,” she recalled. Faced with eviction, Leda had a choice—she could change her ways or take an easier route. She chose the latter and borrowed money from a loan shark. But what seemed like a quick fix soon turned into a nightmare, as the lender began threatening her life daily. Desperate, she paid off the debt by giving him her car. While that solved one problem, it created another. “After losing my car, I got involved in illegal schemes to make money. I started forging documents and manipulating financial records, thinking no one would miss the money. To me, deceiving people was just another shortcut—but my life only kept sinking further.” Her dishonesty didn’t just affect her finances; it damaged her relationships, too. Her credibility was shattered, especially with her son, sister, and mother. “My son didn’t believe a word I said because I never kept my promises. I constantly lied to my family and was always making excuses,” she admitted. The turning point came when Leda realized the real issue—her own choices. “I wanted justice, but I was an unjust

person. My word had no value. I was a liar who didn’t keep promises,” she reflected. One day, a coworker invited her to a Universal Church service. When she got there, she had a revelation—she wasn’t just deceiving people, she was also dishonoring God. “The pastor preached about being faithful to God and putting Him first. That’s when I learned that if I started being faithful to Him, my life would change.”

Leda took that lesson to heart. To her surprise, she was hired by a company offering a salary she never thought she’d earn. That’s when she realized—her first steps toward honesty were already bearing fruit. Through ongoing church teachings, she learned that true change would only come when God’s character became part of her own, and that would only happen if she was filled with His presence. And that’s exactly what happened.

“Now, I despise injustice because when we receive God’s Spirit, He leads us to truth and teaches us to be fair. He guides my decisions. I always tell God—I can lose everything, but I can’t lose the Holy Spirit.”

One of the first things she did after choosing to turn her life around was ask forgiveness from those she had wronged and repay the money she had taken. The coworker who first invited her to church, Antonio, is now her husband. Married for 15 years, they have a daughter, started a shoe company, and even have international clients. In addition to



their business success, they bought a home. “Today, doing the right thing isn’t hard for me. If I have to choose between making a dishonest deal or losing the business, I’d rather lose the business. I’ve learned to be faithful to God in everything,” she concluded.

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From money to moping, these habits and advice can help you manage your mood.

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Stress can be positive or negative and has no agreed-upon definition.

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Positive Stress

Includes: Marriage, promotion, and parenthood.

**Distress**  
Negative Stress

Includes: Divorce, punishment, and finances.

**Chronic Stress**  
Daily Stress

Includes: Bills, kids, and chores.

**Acute Stress**  
Fight or Flight

Includes: Accidents, fear, and injury.

**Finances Are the Largest Cause of Stress**  
These are the most common ways Americans cope:

Tighten budgets	31%
Ignore it	28%
Talk to someone	18%
Focus on work or hobbies	7%
Focus on physical health	6%
Talk to a financial pro	6%

**How to Overcome Money Stress**  
66% of Americans experience regular financial stress.

**Talk Over Tea**  
Talk over your stress to find support and relief. Some hotbeverages are the best to soothe worries.

**Track Your Spending**  
Keep an eye on your budget to find and prevent money troubles, and take control over your finances.

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28% of Americans ignore their financial stress, which can compound stress and finances. Find the cause of stress to work on solutions.

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**Have a salad** – green leafy vegetables can produce dopamine.

**A 15-minute walk** – it is taken to reduce stress and fatigue.

**Aerobic exercise**, like jogging, can reduce stress hormones and increase endorphins.

**Gargle water** to activate your relaxation nerve and induce calm.

**Treat yourself to dark chocolate**, which lowers cortisol and blood pressure.

**Have a laugh** to release endorphins and lower cortisol – even fake laughs work.

**Take deep breaths and identify 5 objects** around you to ground yourself.

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