In Pursuit
of
Righteousness

Fredrick G. Omondi

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are taken from King James Version of the Holy Bible.

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INTRODUCTION

Righteousness is a worthy cause indeed in life and comes about as a result of a regeneration of the heart of a person and which make the person to be able to do righteous deeds/good deeds which comes from the heart that had been regenerated. It is obeying the word of God (doing) the will of God by doing what is good and right in the sight of God who is holy and all righteous in nature.

Now because God is righteous and he expects man who he had created to live a righteous life here on earth where he placed man and that therefore calls for serious and careful living by man. But man fell in sin in the Garden of Eden hence the need for a new birth or regeneration and which God provided through his only Son Jesus Christ for all mankind so as to be able to live the life expected by God from them. This book is an eye-opener and deals with the nitty-gritty part of this very important subject for you and me.

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Chapter 1

What is Righteousness?

Righteousness in a nutshell is doing the will of God. It is obeying the word of God. It is doing what is good and right before God.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**
Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?
And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.
Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:
And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:
And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Matthew 7:21-27

That scripture to me it is self explanatory. Hearing the word of God and obeying it is both good and right and that in itself is righteousness and which is acceptable before God the Father as it is done in God's divine will.

Righteousness is an act that come by faith in God through Jesus Christ and is supposed to take us closer to God and that is why God directs us to pursue it. Righteousness is a continuous process in a lifetime. Righteousness and holiness are the two sides of a coin and the former leads to the latter (John 14:15-17)

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

John 14:15-17

It is by doing the will of God by faith that one is considered to be righteous (James 2:20-22) and it is by that act of obedience in God one can expect God's spirit to come to one to make one holy and to live a holy life.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

Righteousness is a by-product of faith and can be equated to faith.

The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Psalm 145:17

From the above it can be said that righteousness is godliness and that it can be equated to holiness.
This chapter serves as a further introduction before we come to the nitty-gritty part of the subject matter at hand in the subsequent chapters.

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Isaiah 1:17

To do justice is to do righteousness.

Chapter 2

The True righteousness

From the onset according to the holy scriptures true righteousness only come from God the Father and God the Son as God is righteous throughout (He is all righteous). Now the scriptures tell it all.

O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.

Ezra 9:15

God is both holy and righteous and that is why Ezra admits that they cannot stand before God as they are guilty (Have no tangible ground to stand on based on their lives).

The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.

For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

Psalm 11:4-7

God is holy and righteous and will not condone any unrighteousness but to judge accordingly, as he loves only righteousness. The nature of God is righteousness.

We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

According to thy name, **O God,** so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: **thy right hand is full of righteousness.**

Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments

Psalm 48:9-11

God is full of righteousness and that is why the people of Jerusalem and Judah are told to rejoice as God is just in what he does to them. You and me

need also to rejoice because of God as his judgments are true unlike the injustices we face now and then here on earth in human governments.

THE LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.
Clouds and darkness are round about him: **righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.**

Psalm 97:1-2

Only in God's Government can people fully rejoice as there is no corruption of any kind there as everything there is perfect and in complete harmony with His standards.

The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Psalm 145:17

I think the above scripture now crowns it all on the righteousness of God.

Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

John 8:42-47

In verse 46 above Jesus is challenging the Jews to point any unrighteousness in his life as he knew he was blameless before God his Father and was living a life of righteousness throughout in his life.

Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Laz'-a-rus, come forth.

And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, loose him, and let him go.

John 11:38-44

Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

John 9:31

That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

How **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.**

Acts 10:37-38

Doing good in the power of God is righteousness of which Jesus Christ the Son of the living God was full of. Let me say here also that true righteousness can also be manifested in those who have had an encounter with Jesus Christ and have been united in God as detailed in the next chapter (chapter 3).

One may ask why is true righteousness only in God? and those that are in Him? Read on.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without hypocrisy.
And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James 3:17-18

The wisdom from above is true wisdom and comes from God and it is perfect in its entirety and is non other than the word of God in the Holy Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and is practiced by those who are in Christ Jesus the reconciler of mankind to God.

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.
If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of him.

1 John 2:28-29

The children of God are only those who are born of God and are living in righteousness (John 1:10-13, 1 John 3:10). The children of God (the saints) do receive the promise of God (the Holy Spirit) to enable them live righteously.

Chapter 3

Can one be righteous?

For sure for one to be righteous (truly righteous, to say) one must acquire the nature of God through the regeneration of the soul and be united with Christ Jesus.

It is possible to be righteous by making a genuine (true) repentance of one's sins and believing in Christ Jesus the Son of God inviting him into one's heart which will lead to the righteousness that God requires (of His standard). Anything less than the above can only lead to a righteousness that falls short (unrighteousness) and which is unacceptable before God who is holy and righteous. It is so because God and his Son Jesus Christ are righteous and they are one (John 10:30) God being a Trinity, that is, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and therefore as the Savior of mankind he becomes one's righteousness if one believes in him as the following scripture says:

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

2 Corinthians 5:21

In the above scripture God did a wonderful work for us; in that he placed all our sins on his Son Jesus Christ and took Christ's righteousness and deposited in us we that believe in his Son.

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;
That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ;
Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:9-11

In the above scripture apostle Paul wrote that epistle to the church in Philippi and he said that the fruits of righteousness in their lives come as a result of Jesus Christ whom they believed in and who

now lives in them and can make them to make right judgments (decisions) in life and be without offense at the Lord's coming for His holy church.

We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.
Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,
For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;
Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:
As ye also learned of Ep'-a-phras our dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ.
Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.
For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing the knowledge of God;

Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness;

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

Colossians 1:3-13

Apostle Paul in addressing the body of Christ at Colossae informs them of their prayers to them because of their faith in Christ Jesus and desiring them to be filled with knowledge of the will of God to be able to walk worthy of the Lord pleasing him being fruitful in every good work and being strengthened by the power of God in them so as in the end be partakers in the kingdom of God.

Please note that one need to be delivered from the power of darkness and to be translated into the kingdom of God to be able to truly walk worthy of the Lord in righteousness. It is only in the kingdom of God that there is absolute righteousness. Because Satan is the prince of the power of the air, the world is full of darkness (all forms of unrighteousness / wickedness) (Psalms 119:137; 145:17, Ephesians 2:1-10).

That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;
How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Acts 10:37-38

In the above scripture we are told that Jesus of Nazareth was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and power and he went about doing good for God was with him. It follows therefore, that one need to

have the Holy Spirit (God) to be able to truly do good (righteous deeds / righteousness). And for one to be anointed with the Holy Spirit one must have believed in Christ Jesus and have repented of one's sins (Acts 2:36-38).

The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.
He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.
The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

Psalm 145:18-20

The Lord God has extended his hand to all of us who are willing for His touch on their lives (Isaiah 1:18-20, Psalm 51:16-17, Acts 2:36-42).

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

IN those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,

And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sad'-du-cees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Matthew 3:1-8

Do you know why genuine (true) repentance is necessary? It is because by it can come true righteousness. The Pharisees and the Sadducees went to John the Baptist but had not truly repented of their sins and were living in hypocrisy but God expects from people sincerity and honesty (truthfulness) as he Himself is the Truth (Psalm 145:18, John 4:24; 14:6). These people were living in wickedness and were just righteous in their own eyes and not before God. Let us read other scriptures on self-righteousness.

BRETHREN, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.
For I bear them record that **they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.**
For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.
For **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.**

Romans 10:1-4

Apostle Paul's heart's desire and prayer to God applies to all of us as many people in all the nations of the world seek for their own righteousness and not God's righteousness for their lives and for sure are going to be shocked on the judgment day (Matthew 7:21-23) as by merely doing this or that does not make one righteous as such as that is ignorance of God's purpose for one more so for that man had already fallen in the garden of Eden and was no more faultless (Genesis 3:1-24, Romans 3:1-28; 5:12-21).

FINALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

But what thing were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of God by faith:

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Philippians 3:1-11

Apostle Paul whose name was Saul before he was converted to Christ did many things in the flesh (outside of God by his own efforts) and after his conversion is when he realized that all what he did, did not count before God as it was all but unrighteousness. At the time before conversion he had thought he was okay and on the right track in life which was in itself self-righteousness. In writing the above epistle to the church at Philippi he counts all he did as dung and loss to him in life as the Holy Spirit in him revealed to him his past life and his new life now in God (in Christ Jesus) (1 John 2:23, John 10:30).

Wherever you are and whatever you do, do not count what you do as righteousness except if you are in Christ Jesus who is the true vine and nothing good can come from sinful man and he is our righteousness (John 15:1-5, Matthew 7:15-18, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21).

Therefore from the foregoing, one need not have confidence in the flesh or rejoice for it's achievements but rather to put his confidence and trust rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Resurrection and Life and who can make one to do God's will (to live righteously) (John 11:25-27, Philippians 4:13, Romans 8:12-17, Philippians 2:12-13).

Apostle Paul was even ready to suffer for righteousness sake (for Christ's sake) as it was more beneficial in his life and would yield eternal dividends in heaven after this life on earth.

THERE was a certain man in Cae-sa-re'-a called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.

He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming into him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

And when he looked on him he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

Acts 10:1-8

The above is a classical example of the folly in self righteousness. Cornelius we are told was a devout man but for sure he was devout in religious matters which is not necessary being devout in God - Cornelius was just religious as many, many people are today, who try to do what seems right or good

in life hoping to be in a right standing with God. All those “good” acts are done without the faith in God meaning with one’s strength (the flesh) but the things of the flesh do not please God at all (Romans 8:5-8).

If you want to know more about the things of the flesh do read these scriptures (Galatians 5:19-21; 6:7-8, Romans 7:18-19).

Now coming back to Cornelius I am amazed in that Rome is in Italy and apostle Paul earlier we found that he had written an epistle to Rome (the church in Rome) concerning the same issue on being self-righteous and his heart’s desire and prayer to God is that they (Israel who were there then) to be saved.

Cornelius was therefore having a zeal of God but not according to knowledge as he was ignorant of the salvation which comes from the gospel of Jesus Christ and which God sent an angel to inform to go send for Simon Peter (so as to share the gospel of Christ to him). In that, surely God accepted

Cornelius (a Gentile) his efforts in trying to seek God ignorantly (without knowledge).

Now let us look at what Cornelius did (his efforts in the flesh): He gave alms to the people and prayed to God always-all these for sure seems real good acts.

But even sinners give alms and also pray to God for one thing or another, but that does not mean that God accepts/counts such acts as righteousness (John 4:21-25; 9:31, Isaiah 1:10-17). The fact that Cornelius prayers and alms had come up for a memorial before God it does not mean that God accepted them but rather God just did sympathize with him as he kept on losing ignorantly in the kingdom of heaven. God in his discretion so it fit, I believe, to remove Cornelius from that quagmire so that he can begin to gain ground by such efforts as after conversion he would do them in faith and with knowledge. (Galatians 6:8-10, Matthew 6:19-21, 1 Corinthians 15: 58, Acts 9:36-41).

I thank God that Cornelius acted on the message handed over to him by an angel of God and it was

well with him and his household as God now fully accepted them (Acts 10:24-44).

Let us look further at some scriptures why it is necessary for one to acquire/get the nature of God in order to be righteous (begin to live a righteous life).

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled,

In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight:

Colossians 1:19-22

God is all righteous and so is his Son, who had all the nature of God (Colossians 2:8-9) and came to

reconcile mankind back to God so as to be partakers of God's nature in holiness and righteousness and to present them to God holy and not blamable or reprovable (full of righteousness) as it is only in Christ Jesus we can become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for every tree is known by his fruit.

Matthew 12:33

That is why it was necessary for God to send us a righteous Branch (Jesus Christ) for our redemption so as to make us good trees to be able to have good fruits as he is the only Savior (Acts 4:11-12), out of our predicament after our fall through Adam (the first man). Remember that according to God we are trees as per the gospel of Matthew (Matthew 3:7-10) when John the Baptist addressed the hypocrisy in the Pharisees and Sadducees. Read on.

And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:
That no flesh should glory in his presence.
But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:
That, according as it is written, He that gloreth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:28-31).

If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.
But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

John 10:37-38

Jesus Christ is the perfect example for mankind to follow as he is from God the Father who is in him and him in God the Father. Only God is holy, righteous and perfect in all ways and there is no other being like him (Isaiah 43:10-11; 45:22-25; 46:12-13). One can get righteousness only from the Lord.

WE then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have had thee in a time, accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

2 Corinthians 6:1-2

If you are not yet saved this is your acceptable time of salvation and don't procrastinate on this, treat this as urgent and act now! If you don't know how to go about it then go towards the end of the chapters where it is written 'Notes to the reader' for further direction.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.

Job 14:4

We are unclean before God after the fall of the first man Adam in the garden of Eden as this which I do quote—Romans 3:21. We just have to go to the drawing board by believing in Jesus Christ for our

redemption and getting back God's holiness in us that brings righteous living.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nic-o-de'-mus, a ruler of the Jews.
The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him Rabii, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.
Jesus answered and said unto him, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
Nic-o-de'-mus saith unto him,
How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?
Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.
That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:1-6

Both the two scriptures in a way are touching on one thing: The need for a regeneration/a rebirth. Mankind is physical in nature and also fell in the garden of Eden and therefore a total change is necessary to change that fallen state which is according to an all wise God a change which is spiritual in nature which touches the soul to enable mankind, to be led and helped by God's spirit (the Holy Spirit) to be able to live a holy and righteous life without which one cannot enter God's kingdom which is a holy and righteous kingdom. Get to know that anything impure cannot enter heaven (Revelation 21:9-27).

If one thinks that he or she has his or her own righteousness which is not from God in him or her look at this scripture clearly:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness.

Jeremiah 23:5-6

That name stands for Jehovah - Tsdikenu (The Lord our righteousness). We are made righteous by God's power and not by our own power (strength). Read further this scripture (Zechariah 4:5-6) - one need God power not man power.

In pursuit of righteousness one must learn to begin and to continue to live a separated life and not to follow the crowd. One must learn to stand alone living as an individual and not as a group and the saying 'If you are in Rome do as the Romans do' or 'if you can't beat them, join them' may not apply.

Adam did not live a separated life as an individual and the result is that they all ended in falling into sin with his wife (Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7) same to Ananias and Sapphira his wife who did not live as individuals and agreed to lie and all ended in death (Acts 5:1-10).

Therefore, one need to be careful and not to share other's sins. Groupings comes with a lot of compromises in life (Matthew 10:34-39, Luke 12:51-53) and which cannot pass the test of God's standards of holiness and righteousness. It is better to live a separated life here on earth and please the Lord and be blessed and rewarded than live as a group not pleasing the Lord and be cursed and lose (Psalm 1). It is true that one can be righteous right here on earth as is recorded in the scripture.

Ye are the light of the word. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.
Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto that are in the house.
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:20

Both the above scriptures were said by Jesus Christ to his disciples. He knew very well that they had the capacity to do what is good before God the Father and that is why he encouraged them to do so, which is essentially righteousness (righteousness living). Unlike the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees which is but self righteousness (self efforts devoid of God) and inferior in essence. True, righteousness involves God's doings in a person who has Christ Jesus in him or her.

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Revelation 19:6-8

The above talks of the raptured Christians (Saints) who entered into heaven as the Bride to be wedded to Christ Jesus who is the Bridegroom: the garment they are to be in is their righteousness. If they were not righteous here on earth there is no way they could be found in heaven in the marriage of the Lamb of God as God's kingdom is a kingdom only for the righteous as God himself is righteous. So it is possible to live righteously on the earth if one is united with Christ Jesus, the righteous King in the salvation he has brought down to all mankind for acceptance.

Now here are some of the scriptures that point to the fact that in Christ Jesus people can actually live

a righteous life on planet earth and prepare and be ready to live the life after in heaven where God lives eternally.

AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,

And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Mag'-da-lene, out of whom went seven devils,

And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:

A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.

And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred fold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

And his disciples asked him, saying What might this parable be?

And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

They on the rock are they, which when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root,

which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Luke 8:1-15

From the above scripture it comes out clear that the word of God is a seed which when preached it goes into heart of one who sincerely believe it and it germinates and bears the fruit of righteousness after remaining and abiding in the heart of such a person (1 Peter 1:23-25, 2 Peter 1:1-8, 1 John 3:7-10) to put it in another way, such a person becomes a partaker of God's divine nature by the power of the Spirit as has become a new creature (John 1:6-13, 2 Corinthians 5:17) and has the ability to overcome the world and sin (1 John 4:4-6, 5:4-5).

At this juncture let me bring to a stop at what might turn out to be a controversy with those who are unbelieving and might doubt God's word in the following scriptures:

THE fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. they are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.
The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.
They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Psalm 14:1-3

MAN that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.
He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and countinueth not.

And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringeth me into judgment with thee?
Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.

Job14:1-4

What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentles, that they are all under sin;
As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
Ther is none that understandeth, there is none that seketh after God.
They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no,not one.

Romans 3:9-12

I am there to be corrected but I have this to say without any contradiction: The above scriptures are talking of the fallen man who by disobedience took the Adamic nature which is sinful as had forfeited the godly nature when they obeyed Satan in the

Garden of Eden and had to be chased away from the presence of God (Genesis 3) but I thank the Lord so, so, much for bringing a remedy to mankind and it possible to begin a new life with the presence of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus and by the Holy Spirit (Romans 3:20-26, 5:1-21, 8:1-9, 15-17, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

All things are possible to them who are in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:13) include living a holy and righteous life here on earth.

So don't think the scripture is contradicting itself, far from it. if you are a born again Christian and spirit filled you will know it is true- there are no contradictions in the Scripture.

Chapter 4

The Importance of righteousness

It should be noted that when Lucifer rebelled against God he must have realized that he had a minority following (a third of God's angels) and therefore wanted a larger following thinking probably by achieving it he could over power God and how terribly wrong he was and he went ahead into the Garden of Eden in order to persuade man to disobey the commandment of God, using his subtilty. He must have known that if he succeeded in his mission man would lose God's nature which is righteousness and thereby disconnect himself from God and also at the same time lose eternity with God. But God being the Creator of heaven and earth and all beings, knew all of Lucifer's plans and already had in place a plan for restoration of mankind back to himself through his Son Jesus Christ, who would bring back righteousness into man's life once again, as he is righteous just as his Father (Romans 3:20-25) and that is why Jesus Christ told his followers that he was going to his

Father and he will send them another helper/ comforter (the Holy Spirit) to be with them (john 14:15-17, 16:7-15). The Holy Spirit who would bring God's righteousness and eternity in man. It follows therefore that without the Holy Spirit it is impossible to enter the kingdom of God in heaven and live there eternally (John 8:10-11, 1 Corinthians 15:50-54) as God himself is very holy (Isaiah 6:1-3, Revelation 4:1-8). It is only through Jesus Christ that one becomes a candidate / recipient of the Holy Spirit (acts 2:36-38, 13:37-39).

Salvation is the principal thing in the pursuing of righteousness and which one must have in life in order to succeed in becoming truly righteous and acceptable before the Holy one of Israel (Hebrews 12:14).

Each one of us must pursue righteousness as an individual because no one can be delivered by the righteousness of another but by one's own righteousness (Proverbs 11:6, Ezekiel 14:12-20, revelation 19:6-8).

It is important to live a righteous life as God demands it from all people and it is therefore a commandment of God and God is not a respecter of persons as he is not any one's uncles or bothers, that is, he is not a man. God is supreme as the Creator of heaven and earth and all that is in them (Romans 2:11, Psalm 24:1-2).
Righteousness is important because God the Father and God the Son are all righteous (Psalm 11:4-7; 145:17, John 8:38-47; 9:31, Acts 10:37-38).

The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.
The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.
Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.

For the righteous LORD love the righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

Psalm 11:4-7

In the above scripture we are told that God hates the soul of the unrighteous (the wicked) for God is righteous and he shall rain upon the unrighteous snares, fire and brimstone and horrible tempest. So it is bad news not to pursue righteousness as the mentioned rain is a real bad one indeed!

The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Psalm 145:17

The above scripture tells it all that God is righteous in all his ways. Now that includes God's way on judgment as well. God will judge all unrighteousness and only the righteous will have nothing to worry about on the judgment day.

I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him,

We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

Jesus said unto them, If God were your father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?
He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

John 8:38-47

Quite a conversation Jesus had with the Jews and he really challenged them. Why? Because as God the Son he too was sinless, meaning he was all righteous just as God the Father.

And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other one on the left.
Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.
And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering vinegar,

And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, This is the King of the Jews.

And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

Luke 22:33-41

In the above scripture we can see clearly that one of the malefactors hanged with Christ on the cross acknowledged Christ's all righteousness as he said that Christ had done nothing amiss (had done nothing which is wrong/bad/wicked).

That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Acts 10:37-38

Now that scripture tells us what Jesus the Son of God used to do and still continue to do to date - he went about doing good and is still going about doing good to you and me and all other people. Why? Because he was and still is righteous and he changes not (Hebrews 13:8)

Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

John 9:31

Let us do righteously in life if we want to be heard by God. As we saw earlier God hates wickedness and is not ready to entertain it as he is a holy God.

Wickedness does one thing to us - it separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). Now look at these scriptures:

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.
And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repented me that I have made them.
But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.
These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations and Noah walked with God.

Genesis 6:5-9

In that scripture we find that God repented to have made man and was grieved in his heart and he decided that he was going to destroy his creation as a result of unrighteousness / wickedness. But only

one person he found to be different in that he was living righteously and the name of that man was Noah. It is only him that found grace in the eyes of God and he walked with God and his life and that of his whole family were later saved.

As for the rest, they all perished (died) in the floods that later came on the face of the earth.

From the above incidence we learn that wickedness is something very bad and has far reaching consequences and further, if we ever at all want to please God and to get his grace, protection and to walk with him then we must be righteous being just and perfect in our endeavors in life.

There is need to live a righteous life here on earth before God who is both holy and righteous in order to die righteously (sleep) and eventually to land in a rightful place for ones' eternity (Matthew 25:31-40, Revelation 14:13, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the king say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me:

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink?

When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in, or naked, and clothed thee?

Or when saw we sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you; inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Matthew 25:31-40

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

Revelation 14:13

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.
For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.
For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Righteous deeds done out of love in Christ Jesus brings purity in the heart and leads to a state of being blamelessness before God (Philippians 1:9-11, Matthew 5:8)

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ;

Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:9-11

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Matthew 5:8

Get to know that, only one's righteousness can save one and not the righteousness of others (Ezekiel 14:12-14). Hence the need for one's efforts in pursuing the same and by doing so, building an ark for one's ultimate salvation (Hebrews 11:7, Revelation 19:7-8).

The word of the LORD came again to me, saying,
Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:

Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.

Ezekiel 14:12-14

Now the only exception to the above in the Scripture can be seen in the case of Noah in the book of Genesis (Genesis 6,7 and 8) and summarized below in an epistle to the Hebrews, as well as in the case of Lot in the same book of Genesis (Genesis 18 and 19).

But on the above rule in the book of Ezekiel 14:12-14) just continue in pursuing righteously as who knows God may still one day apply again the case of Noah and Lot on you and your family! (Exodus 33:13-19). Verse 19 is God's prerogative and is where I do place my point on.

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of righteousness which is by faith.

Hebrews 11:7

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Revelation 19:7-8

Righteousness exalted a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

Proverbs 14:34

If we want our nation to be exalted above other Nations, we just have to be a righteous people - people who genuinely fear God and shun away all immoral conduct and behavior. Now to be God fearing is not a lip service thing but a right condition from within (from the heart).

Many nations continue to live under very difficult conditions one main reason is because the societies are rotten in morals and that applies to the leaders as well and the nations so affected reap what they

sowed as that is God's measure on man on this planet-it is a universal application (Galatians 6:7-8). Righteousness is very important in that it is God's standard for one's entry into his kingdom. Righteousness comes from a holy/pure heart. Read on.

AND seeing the multitudes he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:
And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,
Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matthew 5:1-12

All the verses in the above scripture which are in bold are efforts by individuals in pursuit of righteousness and the rewards are great. Purity of heart brings about all those blessings as recorded from verse 1 to verse 12. Purity is equated to holiness and righteousness.

Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed

Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord:

Hebrews 12:12-14

Righteousness brings equality and fairness to all people and that includes the disadvantaged and the minority and with that, one can see the Lord at the end of this life on the earth. Holiness is the standard set by God for those who seriously want to enter heaven where God dwells. God is fair to all mankind and therefore why all the unfairness on this earth? why, why, why?

All the perpetuators of such unrighteousness will be judged by God so let us all stop it now.

Straight paths for the feet are made when people live righteous lives and therefore no one can stumble and fall and be hurt in life and that in itself makes life better for everybody and that is, healing.

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

1 John 2:28-3:3

Now that epistle Apostle John wrote to the Church of Christ (true believers in Christ Jesus/born again Christians) and he dwelt more on the subject of holiness. The apostle encouraged them to live righteously in order to have confidence when Christ

comes for his holy Church at rapture and that hope of being with the Lord for ever in heaven, is great love from God the Father.

Christ is holy and hence the need for Christians to maintain holiness in their lives.

Incase you are not born of God, that is, born of the Spirit, all is not lost. You do have an opportunity now to know Christ by repenting of your sins to Him and asking him for forgiveness and inviting him into your heart to be Lord and Savior. After doing that and now a child of God, purify yourself by living a righteous life through the power of God and awaiting for Christ's return to take away the children of God to the Father in heaven (John 3:1-6, 16, John 1:6-13, Romans 3:21-26; 10:1-13, Titus 2:11-14, 1 John 1:8-10; 1 John 5:1-5).

Get to know that the kingdom of God is a kingdom of righteousness and only the righteous will inherit it and that makes righteousness to be most important thing for one's entry into heaven (Psalm 97:1-2, 2 Peter 3:16, Revelation 19:6-10). Now let us read the following.

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

Psalm 69:28

By not living righteously as a Christian your name can be blotted from the book of the living (the book of life), which means missing to enter heaven (Revelation 20:11-15). It is of paramount importance for a Christian to live righteously in order to have one's name to remain in the book of life of the Lamb of God. That is enough reason to make us to strive always to live righteously in life as Christians in order not to be judged and cast into the lake of fire.

Let us know very well that Jesus Christ is both Savior and Judge. He loves us but at the same time hates sin.

Let us therefore love righteousness and hate sin (unrighteousness as Jesus loves only righteousness as he is righteous. Only the righteous and undefiled will enter heaven as their names are in the book of life of the Lamb of God (Revelation 21:9-27).

Loyalty to the cause of the gospel in endurance and bringing many into the kingdom of God teaching them righteousness ensures one's name as a Christian to remain in the book of life (Daniel 12:1-3, Malachi 3:13-18, Matthew 28:16-20, Philippians 4:3) as well as one's obedience to the Lord (Matthew 7:21-27).

God Himself who demands righteousness from all people he is righteous and when his son Jesus Christ came to the Earth he too was righteous, moreover man was created in God's image, after his likeness and therefore need to portray the character of God on the earth. Therefore one cannot afford to lack righteousness.

The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Psalm 145:17

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof.

Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice.

Before **the LORD:** for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he **shall judge the world with righteousness,** and the people with his truth.

Psalm 96:11-13

AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and Branch shall grow out of his roots:

And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD;

AND shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

But **with righteousness shall he judge** the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Isaiah 11:1-5

And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Genesis 1:25-27

Unfortunately, man lost the righteousness of God by disobeying God and obeying Satan (the serpent) instead (Genesis 2:8-17; 3:1-6). But all was not lost as the all wise God had a remedy and which he has availed to man through His Son Jesus Christ and all

are at liberty to take it and to live it for their own good (Romans 3:21-26; 6:23, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, Titus 2:11-14).

But **now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;**
Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:
For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:
Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;
To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Romans 3:21-26

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are past away; behold, all things are become new.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the world of reconciliation.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to **God.**

For he **hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Titus 2:11-14

From the above scriptures it is clear to all mankind that God had given to us a second chance to live righteous and holy lives and to live into eternity with him and therefore no one will have an excuse before God on the judgment day (John 3:16).

Let us remind ourselves that God will judge us in righteousness (Psalm 96:11-13)

Let us therefore seek it and live it in Jesus' name. Amen.

In the first chapter we saw what righteousness is all about, that is, its meaning and in the second chapter we also saw the true righteousness and where it comes from and in chapter 3, we saw that it is possible to be righteous and how to attain it.

Now in this fourth chapter we are going to see the importance of righteousness and the one that leads/crowns them all is eternal life with God in Heaven. Ours as we are going to see just touch on life here on earth and which we are going to see in due course before the end of the chapter.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Romans 8:12-18

Christians are debtors to God touching on righteousness but now they have an opportunity to begin to pay that debt assisted by the Holy Spirit within by living being led by him and that means living a righteous life.

Without salvation and the Holy Spirit one cannot live righteously as God expects.

Jesus Christ who saves is the righteousness of the believers as he Himself is righteous. He also makes them the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:20). He is the one that enables the believers to live a righteous life through his Spirit and without him the believers cannot do anything pleasing to God (John 15:1-5, Philippians 4:13).

AND after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God:

For true and righteous are his judgements: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the

earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

And again they said, Alleluia.

And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshiped God that sat on the throne, saying, A'-men; Alleluia.

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the

Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Revelation 19:1-9

That's it - to be called by God to the marriage supper of the Lamb to be officially wedded to Christ (the Lamb/the bride groom, as you and me are ready, being righteous before the Lord. As we already know, God and his Son Jesus, are holy and righteous. It follows therefore that one need be holy (have the Holy Spirit and live a righteous life portraying the fruit of the Holy Spirit) to be formally united to Christ and to be ushered into Heaven to live with Him eternally (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17). Now there is something else up there in Heaven, Let us see what it is:

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Revelation 22:12

Now for sure nobody hates gifts/rewards and more so from the King of kings and the Lord of lords!!!
It is that great my reader, or what do you yourself say?

It is important to obey God's commandments
And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

1 Samuel 15:22

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep h is commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.
For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

The Scriptures do say that only the righteous walked with God such people as Enoch (Genesis 5:21-24) and Noah (Genesis 6:5-9) and the same

applies to fellowshipping with God as well as in worshipping him (1 John 1:5-7, John 4:20-24) and all that calls for righteous living which is living in the light of the word of God. To walk in darkness is to walk in unrighteousness. God cannot partake unrighteousness as he is righteous. To walk with God is good as he leads those he walks with to green pastures - a far better place (Psalm 23: 1-3) just as he did to Enoch whom he took up with him (Genesis 5:24, Hebrews 11:5).

NOW these are the commandments, the statutes and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it:
That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.
Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase

mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

Deuteronomy 6:1-3

Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;
And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

Deuteronomy 7: 9-10

Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.
And **thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers.**

Deuteronomy 6:17-18

You may say that the above applies only to Israel and not other people in the other nations of the world, but it definitely applies to other nations only this time round the promise is for a much, much better life and land, life in heaven in God's kingdom.

He that diligently seeketh good procureth favor: but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.
He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

Proverbs 11: 27-28

Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings with calves of a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Micah 6:6-8

The above scriptures do point to what is important before the Lord; and that is, righteousness. Let us look yet at other scriptures:

Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken.
Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

Amos 5:14-15

Failing to do righteousness is catastrophic.

For they know not to do right saith the LORD, who store up violence and robbery in their palaces.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; An adversary there shall be even round about the land; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoiled.

Thus saith the LORD; As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of a lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Sa-mar'-i-a in the corner of a bed, and in Damarcus in a couch.

Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob, saith the Lord GOD, the God of hosts,

That in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him I will also visit the altars of Beth-el: and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground.

And I will smite the winter house with the summer house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the LORD.

Amos 3:10-15

Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that

useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work;

That saith, I will build me a wide house and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion.

Shalt thou reign, because thou closet thyself in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgement and justice, and then it was well with him?

He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? Saith the LORD.

But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it.

Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning, Je-hoi'-a-kim the son of Jo-si'-ah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah Lord! Or Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 22:13-19

The above scripture was a prophecy against Jehoiakim the son of Josiah who later after his father's death he was made the king of Judah. King Josiah in his reign was righteous before God and did judgment and justice (verses 15 and 16 above) you can also read about his life in the book of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 34:1-35:19) - his life showed that he knew God and had fear and reverence for him. But now Jehoiakim was quite a contrast for he was unrighteous before God and God said that he cannot reign merely by living in a big house sealed with cedar and that he will not be honored even at his death because of his bad deeds (wickedness) - verses 15, 17 to 19 above) you can also read his life in the book of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 36:5-8) - It was short lived and sad too.

Now that shows very clearly how righteousness is important. For things to be well in your life, live righteously before the Lord God. There is also a big lesson to be learned from that scripture in the book of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 22:13-19) the lesson is that

greatness before God comes about by living righteously in the fear of God and not by being a leader or a rich and wealthy person or a learned person, as all those attributes minus the fear of God comes to zero (is nothing and of no real value).

A classical example is found in the life of Job (Job 1:1-3) who was great not because he was rich and wealthy but because he lived a perfect and upright life in the fear of God by shunning evil and that is why the scripture began by giving his credentials, beginning with the fear of the Lord. Unfortunately, the world has viewed greatness in a totally different context, on what one has acquired in life and not the way heaven views it.

Now in conclusion, let us all have our priorities right just as Abram did (Matthew 6:25-33, Genesis 12:1-10, 13:1-4, 24:33-35). Even Abraham was not great because he was rich and wealthy but because he was faithful to God being obedient to the point of being ready to offer his only son whom he loved, Isaac, as a sacrifice for a burnt offering to God (Genesis 22:1-19) and God ended by calling him

his friend (Isaiah 41:8, James 2:21-23, 2 Chronicles 20:5-7) as Jesus also said (John 15:14). Now look at the following as well.

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;
Who will render to every man according to his deeds:
To them who by patience continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life:
But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,
Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;
But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

Romans 2:5-10

Good works in doing well according to the word of God is to do righteousness and is rewarding before God. So for one to be safe and to receive glory, honor and peace, one must live righteously as that scripture says.

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.

Psalm 119:142

The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in as furnace of earth, purified seven times.

Psalm 12:6

The words of God are trustworthy and one need not ignore any of it at all.

The Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that **God is no respecter of persons:**
But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Acts 10:34-35

I believe nobody would want to be rejected by God and therefore everybody should pursue a righteous life which is possible in God who is righteous eternally (Psalm 119:142).

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:20

The righteousness required by God is far above self-righteousness which the scribes and the Pharisees had (their own righteousness) which is not from God. The righteousness of God can be found only in Jesus and those who have been converted to Him (2 Corinthians 5:19-21).

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Matthew 5:6-8

Those that thirst and hunger after righteousness are blessed for they seek justice by righteousness and therefore are pursing godliness as God is righteous and just. Equally by seeking God that way they can have a purity of heart and blessed and have the possibility of seeing God in the end.

HOW amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts?

My soul lengeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my king and my God.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.

Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.

O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Psalm 84:1-10

In pursuit of righteousness one need to be more in the house of God than being elsewhere as God's house is a house of righteousness and not wickedness just as the psalmist realized and his heart longed to be there as it is a place of goodness. Even the sparrow and the swallow had the same feeling and decided to have their nests there as it is a place of safety. No wonder Anna the daughter of

Phanuel and prophetess made the house of God her abode (Luke 2:36-37). The house of God is a place to reflect on one's life and to adjust accordingly (James 1:25), it is a place for cleansing one's life (John 15:3), it is a place of safety (Psalm 84:3), it is a place to be strengthened and be blessed (Psalm 84:4-7), it is a place of protection (Psalm 84:9-10). Outside there is full of darkness, insecurity and misery (John 16:33; 17:14-17). Now for those who pursue righteousness there are common denominators as recorded in the scriptures and based on the following factors:

1. Health

The following scriptures touch on the health of the righteous: Exodus 15:26, Deuteronomy 7:12, 15; Psalm 92: 12-14, Proverbs 4:20-22, 3 John 2. An example of the same is in the case of Moses and Joshua (Deuteronomy 34:7, Joshua 14:6-11)

2. **Wisdom**

The following are some of the scriptures that touch on wisdom for the righteous: Proverbs 2:6-7, James 1:1-5. Examples are the case of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah (Daniel 1:18-20) and Solomon (1 Kings 4:29-34).

3. Protection

The following scriptures touch on protection of the righteous: Psalms 34:7; 37:28; 41:2; 91:4,11; 97:10; 121:5-8; 125:4, Matthew 10:28-30. Examples are such as the Jews (Ezra 8:31), Elisha (2 Kings 6:15-17), Hananiah, Michael and Azariah (Daniel 3:20-27) Daniel (Daniel 6:14-23), Paul (2 Timothy 3:10-11) and Jews and Gentiles to be saved from the Tribulation period (Revelation 7:1-14).

4. Promotion

The following are scriptures that touch on promotion of the righteous: Job 36:7, Deuteronomy 28:1, 13) Examples of those promoted are such as Joseph son of Jacob (Genesis 39:1, 4; 45:5-8),

Hananiah, Michael and Azariah (Daniel 3:28-30) Daniel (Daniel 5:29, 6:1-2) and Mordecai (Esther 6:1-11).

5. Providence

The following are scriptures touch on providence to the righteous: Psalm 37:25, Matthew 6:25-30, Philippians 4:19). Examples are the Israelites (Exodus 16:4-18; 17:1-7) Solomon (1 Kings 4:22-23) and Elijah (1 Kings 17:1-16; 19:1-8).

6. Long life

The following scriptures touch on long life by the righteous: Deuteronomy 5:33; 11:21, 1 Kings 3:14, Job 5:26, Psalm 91:16, Proverbs 3:2; 9:11; 10:27, 1 Peter 3:10). Examples of such individuals were Enoch and Methuselah (Genesis 5:21-27), Noah (Genesis 9:28-29), Abraham (Genesis 25: 7-8), Isaac (Genesis 35:28-29), Jacob (Genesis 47:27-29), Joseph son of Jacob (Genesis 50:24-26), Moses (Deuteronomy 34:7), Joshua (Joshua 24:29),

David (1 Chronicles 29:26-28) and Job (Job 42:16-17).

7. Prosperity

The following scripts touch on prosperity on the righteous: Deuteronomy 28:1, 11-12; 29:9, 1 Chronicles 22:13; 2 Chronicles 26:5, Psalms 1:1-3; 122:6, Proverbs 14:11, 14) Examples of them who prospered are such as Abraham and Lot (Genesis 13:2-5), Isaac (Genesis 26:12-13) Joseph son of Jacob (Genesis 39:1-3), Solomon (1 Kings 10:14-23), Job (Job 1:1-3; 42:12) and Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57-60)

8. Eternity in heaven

The following are some of the scriptures that touch on the eternity of the righteous: Psalm 37:37, Daniel 12:1, Matthew 8:5-11; 14:41-43; 25:31-40, 46). Some of those meant for eternity in heaven are the apostles of Christ among others (2 Timothy 4:7-8, Hebrews 11:4-16; 32-40, Revelation 7:9-17; 22:14).

The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

Yea, in the way of the judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

Isaiah 26:7-9

It is important to live righteously as by it you are safe when calamity comes (when God's just judgments) fall on the earth. There is no need to learn righteousness the hard way when judgments strikes as it is bitter and not sweet then. Therefore, run to the Lord now in repentance asking for forgiveness and salvation and stay in Him in obedience and you are safe as he becomes your refuge and your fortress (Psalm 91, 2 Peter 2:4-8). To me that I call it wisdom; that is, coming to Jesus for one's salvation repenting of sins committed in

life and inviting him into one's life and then abiding in him in absolute obedience. The opposite is true, that is, to be in Christ and to continue living in disobedience is equated to detach one's life from him/to stop abiding in him as he is the Word of God (John 1:1-5, 1 John 2:24) and he is the Light which is life (John 8:12, 6:63, John 5:11-12.

There is need to live a righteous life here on earth before God who is both holy and righteous so that when death comes one dies (sleeps) righteously.

Chapter 5

The promises on righteousness

God has promised many good things for those who will endeavor to live righteously some of which are enumerated below.

Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.
The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.
The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them of all their troubles.
Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

Psalm 34:14-19

Verse 19 above is in agreement with what apostle Paul told Timothy in his second epistle to him to encourage Timothy to persevere in the Christian Walk (2 Timothy 3:1-12)

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Psalm 37:25

Quite a promise indeed for a righteous man or woman.

But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Proverbs 4:18

The path of the just (righteous) is such that he or she can hardly stumble into something as it is as the shining light. To me that perfect day must be the day the just are snatched away from this corrupt and polluted world. What do you think my reader about that day?

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Leb'-a-non.

Those that be planted into the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

Psalm 92:12-13

Sure it is better to flourish than to diminish.
Say to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Isaiah 3:10

BLESSED is everyone that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.
For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.
Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.
Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.
The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.
Yea thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.

Psalm 128

Now, I love that, how about you?

The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.

Proverbs 20:7

How do you want your children to be after you, blessed or cursed? the choice is yours as you make a decision. It will depend on what side you endeavored in life either in integrity or in corruption?

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap also.
For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but **he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.**
And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
As we have therefore opportunity an opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Galatians 6:7-10

It is good to remain steadfast in doing good and which is righteousness as that scripture promises.

Read also the book of Malachi what God will do to those who serve him as they are doing a good thing (Malachi 3:14-18).

Chapter 6

The rewards for righteousness

There are rewards of God for righteousness some of which are as follows hereunder.

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.

Psalm 37:37

Peace is very important in life hence the need for one to purpose to live uprightly.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.
His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.
Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.
Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkeness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

A good man showeth favor, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.
Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.
He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

Psalm 112:1-7

The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

Proverbs 14:11

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;
So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;
Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;
If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;
Then should thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.
He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.
He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

Proverbs 2:1-8

The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

Psalm 64:10

He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.

Proverbs 10:9

Chapter 7

The danger of self-righteousness

Self-righteousness is hypocrisy before God and is unacceptable to him as he is holy and righteous eternally. Let us see what the scriptures have to say about it.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

Stand in the gate of the LORD'S house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.

For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor;

If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:
Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.
Behold, ye trust in lying words that cannot profit.
Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Ba'-al, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;
And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?
Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD.
But go ye now unto my place which was in Shi'-loh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.
And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not;

Therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to Shi'-loh.

And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of E'-phra-im.

Jeremiah 7:1-15

God through the prophet Jeremiah reprimanded the behavior of the people of Judah and demanded a repentance from them as they lived a hypocritical life in unrighteousness which to them (in their eyes) it was righteousness, simply because they were going and entering into the temple of the Lord (which of course cannot be an immunity to cover their wicked acts) which they trusted in. God warned them of the likely consequences if they do not thoroughly amend their ways and doings.

The same scenario is now being repeated in many churches where wicked people flock not to amend their ways and doings by such attendance but to use

that as a cloak to cover their wicked activities out there.
But their days are numbered as God will not tolerate such behavior if such people remain adamant.

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

Proverbs 12:15

Hypocrisy or self-righteousness is but foolishness and profits nothing to the hypocrite- it is a waste of time before the holy God, the God of Israel.

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Isaiah 64:6

That ought to be the prayer of any self-righteous man or woman because that is how self-righteousness is, it can be equated to filthy rags.

O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?
for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.
Therefore I have hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth.
For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Hosea 6:4-6

The goodness of the people of Ephraim and Judah fell short of God's standard as God is holy. Their goodness could not hold before God as had no eternal value and very temporal and goes away / vanishes into thin air and can be equated to mere public relations exercise.

God requires holiness without which judgment is inevitable as God is a God of justice, and judge sin. There is a need for men to have the knowledge of God by fearing to do wickedness and loving to do righteousness. God is not interested by mere shows

by men which is essentially hypocrisy in his eyes. Now look at the following scriptures.

Hast thou faith? have *it* to yourself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.
And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin. -

Romans 14:22-23

It all has to do with true faith in God or else it is sin, it is hypocritical in nature.

Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.
But what things were gain to me those I counted loss for Christ.
Yea doubtless, and I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all

things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which *is* of the law, but that which *is* through the faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Philippians 3:6-9

What counts is not to be legalistic but to be righteous through the faith of Christ. Righteousness of any kind which is outside Christ is self-righteousness and is useless just as dung. So let us be in Christ Jesus by faith and do thing right by the power of the Holy Spirit and in the true fear of God the Father who is in heaven and for sure it will be much gain and not a loss at all at all. Our own righteousness without the fear of God is empty.

O YE children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Te-ko'-a, and set up a sign of fire in

Beth-hac'-ce-em: for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction.

I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman.

The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; they shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place.

Prepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out.

Arise, and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces.

For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her.

As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness: violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds.

Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts,

They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grape gatherer into the baskets.

To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

Therefore, I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in: I will pour out upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days.

And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD.

For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

They have healed also the heart of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.

Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 6:1-15

The above was a warning by the prophet Jeremiah to the people of Israel who discredited the words of the Lord by the prophet and who were living in self-righteousness doing their own things in greed and falsehood which is unrighteousness and of course a wrong foundation of life and that God's fury for sure was going to be poured out on them.

The above is equally true to all of us today. If we refuse to listen and obey the word of God being critical of it for sure God is going to visit us and we will fall too. It will not be business as usual again. Let us also look at the following scriptures:

Therefore whoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

And the rain descended, and the floods came and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Matthew 7:24-27

If one does not build one's life on Christ Jesus who is the Word of God and is Righteous, one is building on sand; on unrighteousness and will fall and it will not be an ordinary fall but a great fall. I believe not one likes to fall you my reader included. Unrighteousness is short lived in that in due course it must face God's wrath in judgment.

But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard.

He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went.

And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.

Whether of them twain, did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Matthew 21:28-32

It is that serious. One will miss (fail short) of entering heaven simply because one refused to follow the way of righteousness in Christ Jesus (who is the rock- a sure foundation). If you doubt what I have said, be obliged to read for yourself the

following: Matthew 7:21-23; 25:1-13, Revelation 19:1-9; 21:1-8.

We saw that the first son repented for what he told his father and went ahead to show the fruit of his repentance by doing the will of his father. It is the same with the Father who is in Heaven (God) who is delighted in us doing His will here on earth so as to have an opportunity to be with him up there in Heaven for ever and ever. Without repentance, faith and obedience (righteousness) we definitely are going to miss that golden opportunity availed to us by God the Father who did create us.

Let us learn to love God by being obedient to his word and not to do our own things which can be equated to unrighteousness (Romans 10:1-4) as God truly loves us (John 3:16).

No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Luke 16:13-15

Self-righteous is simply self-justification and is an abomination before God who knows the hearts of all people.

And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.

Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Luke 18:9-14

Now that is how dangerous it is to be self-righteous - one gains no marks before God and leave empty handed before him which is really bad news!

JESUS went unto the Mount of Olives.

And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act;

Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?

She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

John 8:1-11

I believe that woman never went back to adultery again as it was quite a close shave with judgment. In that incident we can clearly see a bunch of hypocrites condemning that woman as they too were not righteous before God and that is why by what Jesus told them none dared at all to cast a stone at the woman as all were guilty of sin just as that woman and had to leave to avoid embarrassment.

They must have realized that Jesus was able to pin point the sins of each one of them - they left to save their faces. As human beings we are fond of seeing others faults than our own faults always forgetting what Jesus taught (Matthew 7:1-5).

There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

Proverbs 30:12

That generation is with us even today who can tell you that they don't need salvation, as they have not done this or that. The fact remains that mankind

had fallen, the whole of mankind and each one need to repent to God asking for forgiveness and cleansing believing in the only Savior Jesus Christ to be washed by the blood of this Lamb of God and to start life on a clean slate bringing forth fruit meet for repentance which is true righteousness, assisted of-course by the spirit of God.

Therefore it is not a question of I do or I don't do this or that, but a question of have one's sins been forgiven and one's heart cleansed by the blood of Jesus that was shed at the cross by believing in His death and resurrection? (Romans 3:21-24; 10:1-13).

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they

themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments,

And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

And greetings in the markets and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

But, woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven

against men: for ye neither go in yourselves neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour windows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

And Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that santifieth the gift?

Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

Woe into you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which

indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness.

Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous,

And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

That upon you may came all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zech-a-ri'-ah the son of Bar'-a-chi'-as, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

Matthew 23:1-36

Jesus Christ denounced the scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy. The danger is that they are destined for the judgment in hell quite serious indeed and most horrendous/horrible experience.

May the Lord God, help us not to follow that Pharisaic legalism which in devoid of the true salvation in Christ Jesus and which brings with it a real regeneration that leads one to righteous living which is meant for candidates for heaven (Titus 2:11-14; 3:3-8).

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;
Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;
Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from al iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Titus 2:11-14

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.
But after that the kindness and love of God our savior toward man appeared,
Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior;

That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.

These things are good and profitable unto men.

Titus 3:3-8

Chapter 8

Those who pursued righteousness

In this chapter we are going to see some of those who pursued righteousness in their lives while on the earth as recorded in the holy scriptures (Matthew 5:6).

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Matthew 5:6

Now that becomes our key scripture, why? Because such are people with the character of the kingdom of God in heaven where there is complete/perfect holiness and righteousness. Such usually are people who have accepted Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior and have decisively purposed in their hearts to live a righteous life for Christ's sake.

1. **Abel**

AND Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.
And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought offering to the LORD.
And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

Genesis 4:1-4

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous,
God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

Hebrews 11:4

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city.

That upon you may came all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zech-a-ri'-ah son of Bar-a-chi'-as, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

Matthew 23:34-36

Abel's offering as well as Abel himself received God's acceptance. Abel had acted by his faith in God by doing the will of God (Leviticus 3:16-17). He acted with knowledge and not ignorantly as Cain his elder brother (Romans 10:1-3). When Jesus was denouncing the scribes and the Pharisees and what would befall on them and he mentioned Abel as one of the righteous in the above scripture.

2. Enoch

And E'-noch lived sixty and five years, and begat Me-thu'-se-lah:

And E’-noch walked with God after he begat Me-thu’-se-lah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

And all the days of E’-noch were three hundred sixty and five years:

And E’-noch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Genesis 5:21-24

We are told Enoch walked with God but God is holy and therefore Enoch must have been a righteous man as not any one can walk with God, except he or she is living righteously as God is a consuming fire and does not tolerate any sin (Hebrews 12:28-29).

3. Noah

AND it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.

There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowl of the air; for it repented me that I have made them.

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham and Ja'-pheth.

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Make thee an ark of go'-pher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breadth of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food to thee, and for them.

Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

AND the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteousness before me in this generation.

Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by the sevens, the male and this female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female.

Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him.

And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

Of clean beasts and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of everything that creepeth upon the earth.

There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

Genesis 6:1-7:10

Just as Enoch who walked with God until God took him away with him, Noah too we are told he walked with God as he was a righteous man and found grace in the eyes of God. The earth then was corrupt just like today every where in every nation and in some countries like ours (Kenya) corruption has been considered as something normal by many who are not saved which to me is a total disaster. In that corrupt generation then; Noah was found to be perfect before God. It has been said that action speaks louder than words and it was very true with the man Noah (Genesis 6:22; 7:9) so God did not lie when he said Noah was a just and righteous man (Genesis 6:9; 7:1). Noah obeyed God to the letter (Genesis 6:18-20/7:7-9).

Now what surprises me even more is that God's instructions to Noah were full of details yet Noah did exactly as he was instructed, I do think he was an excellent listener, had a very good memory or probably he had a pen and a note book taking down notes/instructions as they were being given to him by God. I have found out that Noah because of his righteousness by faith he saved, himself and his family by God's grace (Hebrews 11:7) but let me bring to your notice that on the judgment day, it will be totally different when God will be judging on who to go to heaven (Ezekiel 14:12-14) so that tells us that each one of us must not depend on others' righteousness for our safety as each one has to individually repent of one's sins to God and by faith to accept (acknowledge) the sacrifice of Christ on the cross for one's salvation and to begin to live righteously (John 3:16, Acts 2:36-38; 17:30-31, Philippians 2:12-13, Revelation 20:12, 15). Noah lived long (Genesis 9:28-29)

4. Abram

NOW the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

So Abraham departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Har'-an.

And Abram took Sar'-a-i his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Har'-an; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

Genesis 12:1-5

Abram had faith in God and that is why he obeyed the voice of God and that is righteousness. Abram did not obey God at that only but on other occasions a good example is in chapter 22 from verse 1 to 18. Abraham's faith has also been acknowledged in the epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 11:8-10; 17-19). Now God blessed Abram greatly (Genesis 13:1-4; 24:30-35) and he died a peaceful death in old age (Genesis 15:12-15; 25:7-8).

5. Lot

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

And turning the cities of Sodom and Go-mor'-rah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly;

And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

(for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

2 Peter 2:4-9

In that scripture we are told that Lot was a righteous man and God saved his life out of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. God had also blessed Lot (Genesis 13:5)

6. Joseph

AND Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.

These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bil'-hah, and with the sons of Zilp-ah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

Genesis 37:1-2

The fact that Joseph brought to his father evil report of his brethren shows that he shunned evil and loved righteousness or else he would not have bothered himself to do so if he was comfortable with evil actions/behavior of his brethren. Read on.

AND Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Pot'-i-phar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him out of the hands of the Ish'-mae-lites, which had brought him thither.

And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.

And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had,

that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.

And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person and well-favored.

And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.

But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;

There is none greater in this house than I: neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.

And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within.

And she caught him by the garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

Genesis 39:1-12

As I just said earlier, Joseph shunned evil and loved righteousness and he was serious at it now see for yourself. He was not a hypocrite like the scribes and Pharisees that Jesus rebuked. Joseph was but a wise lad who heeded God's counsel (1 Corinthians 6:16-20, Psalm 119:7-11) and God delivered him out of that temptation (2 Peter 2:9).

Because Joseph was determined to do God's will in life God was with him and blessed him as he had his priorities right first time (Genesis 39:2; 41:37-44, Matthew 6:30-33) and he lived along life (Genesis 50:24-26)

7. Moses

AND Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the E-thi-o'-pi-an woman whom he had married: for he had married an E-thi-o'-pi-an woman.

And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.

(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth).

And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.

And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

Numbers 12:1-10

Moses was a righteous man and that is why God had to defend him against his sister Miriam and his brother Aaron and passed judgment on Miriam immediately after addressing them. Moses had faith in God which is righteousness in itself (Hebrews 11:6; 23-29).

Moses lived a long life and died still a strong man (Deuteronomy 34:7).

8. Joshua

As the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

Joshua 11:15

And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.

Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you:

Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,

Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell

therein, save Cabeb the son of Je-phun'-neh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

But your little ones, which you said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.

But as for you, your carcasses they shall fall in this wilderness.

Number 14:26-32

From the above scriptures we can see that Joshua was righteous in that he obeyed God's commandments fully and did not leave anything to chance and God allowed him, and Caleb and the little ones of the children of Israel to possess the promised land of Canaan. Joshua died in old age (Joshua 24:29).

9. Caleb

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, everyone a ruler among them.

And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Par'-an: all those men were heads of the children of Israel.

And these were their names: of the tribe of Reuben, Sham-mu'-a the son of Zac'-cur.

Of the tribe of Simeon, Sha'-phat the son of Hor'-i.

Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Je-phun'-neh.

Of the tribe of Is'-sa-char, I'-gal the son of Joseph.

Of the tribe of E'-phra-im, O-she'-a the son of Nun.

Of the tribe of Benjamin,

Pal'-ti the son of Ra'-phu.

Of the tribe of Zeb'-u-lun, Gad'-di'-el the son of So'-di.

Of the tribe of Joseph, namely of the tribe of Ma-nas'-seh, Gad'-di the son of Su'-si.

Of the tribe of Dan, Am'-mi-el the son of Ge-mal'-li.

Of the tribe of Asher, Se'-thur the son of Michael.

Of the tribe of Naph'-ta-li, Nah'-bi the son of Voph'-si.

Of the tribe of Gad, Geu'-el the son of Ma'-chi.

These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called O'-she'-a the son of Nun Je-hosh'-u-a.

And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way south ward, and go up into the mountain:

And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many;

And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds;

And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was of the time of the first ripe grapes.

So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Re'-hob, as men come to Ha'-math.

And they ascended by the south, and came unto He'-bron; where A-hi'-man, She'-shai, and Tal'-

mai, the children of Anak, were (Now He'-bron was built seven years before Zo'-an in Egypt)

And they came unto the brook of Esh'-col, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.

The place was called the brook Esh'-col, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.

And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Par'-an, to Ka'-desh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land.

And they told him, and said,

We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.

The A-mal'-ek-ites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hit-tites, and the Jeb'-u-sites, and the Am'-o-rites, dwell in the mountains: and the Ca'-na-an-ites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Caleb as a spokesman of that group of spies gave a good report and encouraged the congregation of the children of Israel as he had faith in the God of Israel and Moses his servant but the other 10 save for Joshua, all gave a bad (an evil) report which really discouraged the congregation to an extent that the congregation began to murmur against Moses and against Aaron, raising their voices in crying and wailing. As you have read on the account of Joshua, God was pleased with only Caleb and Joshua who were faithful to God (Numbers 14:26-32).

10. Samuel

AND Samuel said unto all Israel,

Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and gray headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my children unto this day.

Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind my eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand.

And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

And Samuel said unto the people, It is the LORD that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.

Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers.

When Jacob was come to Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses

and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.

And when they forgat the LORD their God, he sold them into the hand of Sis'-e-ra, captain of the host of Ha'-zor, and into the hand of Phil-is'-tines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.

And they cried unto the LORD, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served Ba'-a-lim, and Ash'-ta-roth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.

And the LORD sent Jer-ub-ba'-al, and Be'-dan, and Jeph'-thah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king.

Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! And, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

If ye will hear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God.

But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.

Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.

Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.

And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they are vain.

For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.

Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and right way:

Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.

But if ye shall still do wickedly ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

Now that was a sermon and a half! The prophet Samuel really preached admonishing the children of Israel, because he himself he was a righteous man and had but to preach the righteousness of God to them for their own good. Here was a man of integrity and who could not be compromised by any body and who truly stood for the Lord and drew their hearts back to the Lord by asking God for thunder and rain which God answered as he was a righteous man and who faithfully had served the Lord in his life. (verses 16 to 18) as a result of (John 9:31) read also 1 Kings 18:15-45, John 11:38-45. Samuel had faith in the God of Israel as recorded in the epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 11:32).

11. David

AND it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Phil-is'-tines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-ge'-di.

Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.

So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul.

But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.

David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My Lord the king And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

And David said to Saul, wherefore hearest thou men's words saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee today into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my Lord; for he is the LORD'S anointed.

Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

After whom is the king of Israel come out? After whom dost thou pursue? After a dog, after a flea.

The LORD therefore be judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.

And he said to David, Thou are more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

And thou hast showed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.

For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore the LORD reward the good for that that thou hast done unto me this day.

And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

And David swear unto Saul.

And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

1 Samuel 24

Saul was determined to take David's life by going to look for him with three thousand chosen men out of Israel (a whole army of soldiers)! And it was not the first time he had wanted to do away with David's life as earlier he had made several attempts all which flopped (1 Samuel 18:1-16; 19:8-24; 23:6-29).

But David as we have seen above (1 Samuel 24) spared the life of Saul who acknowledged that

David was righteous more than him. Saul was so ashamed that he wept, seeing the goodness and humility of David.
David did what was right before God (Romans 12:17-21).

AND the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gib'-e-ah, saying, Doth David hide himself in the hill of Ha-chi'-lah, which is before Je-shi'-mon?
Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.
And Saul pitched in the hill Ha-chi'-lah, which is before Je-shi'-mon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw Saul came after into the wilderness.
David therefore sent spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.
And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his

host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him.

Then answered David and said to A-him'-e-lech the Hit'-tite, and the Abi'-shai the son of Zeru'-iah, brother of Jo'-ab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abi'-shai said, I will go down with thee.

So David and Abi'-shai came to the people by night: and behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

Then said Abi'-shai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.

And David said to Abi'-shai,

Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?

David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.

The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

So David too the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep; because a deep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

1 Samuel 26:1-12

Saul was not remorseful of his evil intentions against David and what he told David were most likely mere pretence to save face because now yet again he was at it in trying to get and take away David's life. It a completely unashamed act on Saul's part to do so, after he plainly and clearly saw how David spared his life. I am surprised at Saul who was a king and yet he decides to sleep in a trench in seeking for a man who is not an enemy

and leaving his comfortable bed behind - if that was not a spirit of foolishness then what was it? Tell me. Surely wickedness comes from the wicked, quoting the proverb David said earlier in chapter 24. I do remember the warning in the book of Proverbs (Proverbs 29:1) Saul had reached the point of no return (there was no remedy for his habitual sin) and that is why Saul soon met his tragedy together with his three sons in one single day which was of course a personal curse of Saul which affected all his sons as well (1 Samuel 31:1-6).

David had spared Saul's life yet again and proved righteous and had not sworn before Saul in vain earlier prior to this.

We learn something in the last verse (verse 12 of 1 Samuel 26)

Never make attempts to destroy the righteous as God is on their side to defend them and you can as well lose in the end just as Saul who made so many attempts against David and received the biggest loss ever (four deaths together in one day).

Remember that battle against the righteous mostly is against God Himself so be very careful lest you are consumed with God's fire (2 Chronicles 20:1-25, Hebrews 12:29, Hebrews 10:26-31).

12. Solomon

And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.

And the king went to Gib'-e-on to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

In Gib'-e-on the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

And the servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; nor asked for the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

1 Kings 3:3-13

Solomon loved the Lord and did walk in the statutes of his father David meaning walking in the statutes of God and asked God for a wise thing indeed that did please God. For he asked for wisdom so as to be able to judge the people of Israel righteously, meaning he yearned to see justice being done to the people of Israel in his reign. As you know, God is a God of justice and loves just that justice. Now justice is but righteousness and therefore it can be said that Solomon loved righteousness and practiced righteousness. Because of that God gave him apart from wisdom, riches and honor and Solomon applied the wisdom accordingly (verse 16 to 28) and Solomon also built a majestic and monumental temple for the Lord which had a lot of expertise and artistry and brought the ark of the covenant into it and furnished the temple as necessary and

dedicated it to the Lord and Solomon as God promised him riches, Solomon was very, very rich, super rich to say. If he was living now, he would be a multi billionaire I would say so (1 Kings 10:14-28).

13. Hezekiah

NOW it came to pass in the third year of Ho-she'-a son of E'-lah king of Israel, that Hez-e-ki'-ah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine, years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zach-a-ri'-ah.

And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD according to all that David his father did.

He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Ne-hush'-tan.

He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.

For he clave to the LORD, an departed not form following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.

And the LORD was with him; and the prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king Assyria, and served him not.

2 Kings 18:1-7

Hezekiah was righteous before God and God prospered him. He was a great reformer in the land of Judah and no other king could be compared to him. God fought for his battle and when Hezekiah was sick and he prayed to God his health was not only restored but God added to his life fifteen more years.

14. Josiah

JO-SI'-AH was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in

Jerusalem. And his mothers' name was Je-di'-dah, the daughter of A-dai'-ah of Bas'-cath.

And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Jo-si'-ah, that the king sent Sha'-phan the son of Az-a-li'-ah, the son of Me-shul'-lam, the sribe, to the house of the Lord, saying,

Go up to Hil-ki'-ah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people:

And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house,

Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.

And Hil-ki'-ah the high priest said unto Sha'-phan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD.

And Hil-ki'-ah gave the book Sha'-phan, and he read it.

And Sha'-phan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

And Sha'-phan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hil-ki'-ah the priest hath delivered me a book.

And Sha'-phan read it before the king.

And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

And the king commanded Hil-ki'-ah the priest, and A-hi'-kam the son of Sha'-phan, and Ach'-bor the

son of Mi-chai'-ah, and Sha'-phan the scribe, and As-a-hi'-ah a servant of the king's, saying,

Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not herkened unto the words of this book, to do according to all that which is written concerning us.

So Hil-ki'-ah the priest, and A-hi'-kam and Ach'-bor, and Sha'-phan, and As-a-hi'-ah, went unto Hul'-dah the prophetess, the wife of Shal'-lum the son of Tik'-vah, the son of Har'-has, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her.

And she said unto them, thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the word of the book which the king of Judah hath read:

Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.

But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the LORD thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel,

As touching the words which thou hast heard;

Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me;

I also have heard thee, saith the LORD.

Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

2 Kings 22

Now Josiah too was a righteous man and brought a lot of reforms even restoring the pass over in addition to repairing the house of the Lord and humbled himself when the book of the law which was found in the house of the Lord was read to him and he obtained God's favor and was promised a peaceful death and that he would not see the evil events that would befall the land.

15. Job

THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one of his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did job continually.

Job 1:1-5

From what we have just read in that scripture, it is enough to say/conclude that the man Job was but a righteous man. From verse 6 onwards up to chapter 2 and verse 10 we find that Satan asked for permission to go and tempt Job and God granted it and in both the two cases in total Job remained intact not losing his integrity and sinned not. Finally in the end if we go to the last chapter of this book of Job (chapter 42) we find that God did restore not only Job's health but restore as well his wealth two-fold in addition to him getting another

seven sons and three daughters who replaced the ones he lost when Satan was tempting him. Not only that, but the three daughters were so fair that there were no such women in that land and Job lived for another one hundred and forty years and died old and full of days.

16. Daniel

IN the third year of the reign of Je-hoi'-a-kim king of Judah came Neb-u-chad-nez-zar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

And the Lord gave Je-hoi'-a-kim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shi'-nar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

And the king spake unto Ash'-pe-naz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of princes;

Children in whom was no blemish, but well-favored, and skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in

knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chal'-de-ans.

And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Han-a-ni'-ah, Mish'-a-el, and Az-a-ri'-ah.

Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name Bel-te-shaz'-zar; and to Han-a-ni'-ah, of Sha'-drach; and to Mishael of Me'-shach; and to Az-a-ri'-ah of A-bed'-ne-go.

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the potion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Now God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

Daniel 1:1-9

From the above scripture we can deduce that Daniel was a righteous man because he as a Hebrew child knew about the God of Israel their God and that he is the holy one of Israel and therefore because king Nebuchadnezzar was a pagan king, he could not accept to partake of the king's provision lest he be defiled and he purposed so in his heart and decided to be excluded from those provisions of the king which consisted of meat and wine and requested instead to be provided with vegetables and water instead.

God who sees and searches the hearts of men saw that and we are told that he brought favor and tender love to Daniel with the prince of the eunuchs so that his request was granted. Let us see further what happened with Daniel.

IT pleased Da-ri'-us to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom;

And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Da-ri'-us, live for ever.

All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counselors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask

a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

Wherefore king Da-ri'-us signed the writing and the decree.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Daniel 6:1-10

Daniel who was a righteous man continued with praying and giving thanks to God of Israel unbothered by the decree as he knew it was not sinful to do so as God demands our thanksgiving and expects us to pray to him and to worship him.

If it was not right to pray God would have not delivered him out of the lions' den.

18. Hananiah

19. Mishael

20. Azariah

NEB-U-CHAD-NEZ'-ZAR the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Du'-ra, in the province of Babylon.

Then Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king had set up.

Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar had set up.

Then a herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Neb'-u-chad-nez'-zar the king had set up:

And whose falleth not down and worshipeth the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshiped the golden image that Neb'-u-chad-nez'-zar the king had set up.

Wherefore at that time certain chal-de'-ans came near, and accused the Jews.

They spake and said to the Neb'-u-chad-nez'-zar , O king, live for ever.

Thou, O King, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp,

sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

And whose falleth not down and worshipeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Sha'-drach, Me'-shach and A-bed'-ne-go; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Then Neb'-u-chad-nez'-zar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Sha'-drach, Me'-shach and A-bed'-ne-go. Then they brought these men before the king.

Neb'-u-chad-nez'-zar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Sha'-drach, Me'-shach and A-bed'-ne-go, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the image which I have made; well:

but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

Sha'-drach, Me'-shach and A-bed'-ne-go, answered and said to the king, O Neb'-u-chad-nez'-zar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Daniel 3:1-18

The trio refused to obey the king on his decree as they knew the God they were serving and could not sin against him by serving any other god or falling down to worship any image and God delivered them out of the burning fiery furnace miraculously and the king was astonished at that event and promoted instead of punishing them (verses 19 to

30). As God of Israel is all righteous the trio had decided to live righteous lives as well.

21. John the Baptist

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

For this is he that was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a learthen girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,

And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sad'-du-cees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O

generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Matthew 3:1-12

At that time Herod the te'-trach heard of the fame of Jesus,

And said unto his servant,

This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for He-ro'-di-as sake his brother Philip's wife.

For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.

Matthew 14:1-4

John the Baptist, the fore runner of Jesus Christ came preaching righteousness to all people regardless of their status/position in the society including even king Herod whom he feared not to rebuke of his sin.

He had earlier done the same to the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism in river Jordan for their hypocrisy. He was a righteous man and for that preaching of repentance and turning to Jesus for one's salvation king Herod had him put into prison and later ordered him killed and this was a the time of the king's birthday celebration and his

disciples came and took his body and buried him and they told Jesus about it (verses 5-14).

22. Joseph

23. Mary

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Then Joseph, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

But while he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this is done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Im-man'-u-el, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

And knew her not till she had brought forth her first born son: and he called his name JESUS.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

Saying, where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests, scribes and of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And they said unto him, In Beth-lehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Beth-lehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among

the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

And he sent them to Beth-le-hem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they have heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come unto the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Beth-lehem, and in all the coasts thereof from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great moaning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Ar-che-la'-us did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Matthew 1:18-2:23

As I said earlier concerning the life of David, many a times, it is sheer waste of time to try to kill a righteous man. Saul failed to kill David and likewise Herod failed to kill the young child Jesus.

God is both omniscient and omnipotent always in the know and able to do what he pleases all the time any where both in heaven and on earth. While Herod was busy in his schemes, God was working behind the scenes unnoticed.

We are told that Joseph was a just man and Mary too stayed away from men as she was a virgin all the time until the glad tiding (her conception) by the holy Spirit. She too carried herself very well and was a righteous woman too. Now that is how it should be even today as that is God's pattern/standard for human beings prior to entering into marriage.

Now coming to Herod and all Jerusalem, it seems they were not ready to receive Jesus as all were troubled instead of being joyful and was quite a contrast to the wise men who were rejoicing when they saw the young child Jesus and loved it in

action as they fell down and worshiped him and to crown it all gave out gifts, and gifts they were indeed! Herod was not only a hypocrite, but a big one, a big hypocrite and we can see what he told the wise men and what he later did. No wonder God did not allow him to see the star the wise men saw. Now those were wise men indeed as they heeded the warning from God not to go back to Herod also their desire to see Jesus was overwhelming and what they did when they saw him was most pleasing. Joseph and Mary on their part too always obeyed the word of the Lord as they received it from an angel of the Lord and that was a show/evidence of true righteousness. While Herod had evil intentions on the child Jesus, the scriptures continued to be fulfilled. That is why the Lord's prayer is important 'thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven'.

24. Joseph of Arimathea

And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counselor; and he was a good man, and a just:

(the same had not consented to the council and deed of them) he was of Ar-im-a-the'a. A city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

Luke 23:50-53

When the even was come, there came a rich man of Ar-im-a-the'a, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple.

He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

And when Joseph had taken up the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

And laid, it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, and departed.

And there was Mary Mag'-da-lene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulcher.

Matthew 27:57-61

In the above two scriptures we are able to see that Joseph was a righteous man being a disciple of Jesus Christ and truly brought forth fruits meet to repentance as he not only consented not to the council and their deed but also begged for the body of Jesus after he had been crucified on the cross and he wrapped the body in a clean linen cloth and laid the body in a new tomb which he had prepared for himself in advance, being a rich man and ensured it was well kept by rolling a great stone to the door. Righteousness has to do with good works done by faith in the Lord (in Christ Jesus).

The question is, which righteousness do you claim to have? The righteousness of God or your own righteousness? Joseph of Arimathea the disciple of Jesus really humbled himself and did what was good and right before God the Father by according the body of his Master to be laid to rest in a new tomb which was his own and also wrapped the

body in a clean linen cloth. He saw how the world had harshly treated his Lord. Even when Jesus was born the world could only accord him a manger and not an inn (Matthew 21:1-43; Luke 2:1-7).

25. Paul

And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

1 Corinthians 15:8-10

Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

Thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own country men, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

In weariness and painfulness, in watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the case of all the churches.

Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

In Damascus the governor under Ar'-e-tas the king kept the city of the Dam-as-cenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:
And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

2 Corinthians 11:23-33

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.
I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
Henceforth there is laid for up me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

Apostle Paul humbled himself and said that by the grace of God he was made by God and all he did was by God in him and he labored and suffered so much for Christ's sake. He further confidently said he had kept the faith and what awaits him is a crown of righteousness and not him alone but like-

minded people as well who are in the Lord. He could not have said so if he lived an unrighteous life and therefore, he was a righteous man doing the will of God preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ relentlessly.

26. Cornelius

THERE was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.

He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day **an angel of God coming unto him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.**

And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

And now **send men to Joppa, and call for a one Simon, whose surname is Peter:**

He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: **he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.**

Acts 10:1-6

BRETHREN, **my hearts' desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.**
For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.
For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.
For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

Romans 10:1-4

Now keenly look at the two scriptures and the words I have underlined for more clarity of the matter.

Cornelius pursued righteousness by his own efforts (works of the flesh) without faith in Jesus Christ who is Righteous and God remembered his

righteous deed of alms giving and had pity on him as a man cannot be made righteous by the works of the law but by the faith in Jesus Christ (the Savior) (Galatians 2:15-16; 3:6-14) and therefore God sent an angel to direct him to Simon Peter who would preach the good news to him for salvation. You can read what later transpired in verse 7 onwards of chapter 10 of the book of Acts of the Apostles.

The word of the LORD came again to me, saying,
Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:
Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.

Ezekiel 14:12-14

From the above scripture we see what individual accountability means and which many have ignored

and think that on judgment God will apply group accountability, no please.

Each person on earth must pursue righteousness individually as you cannot force others around you to do so but can only point to them the importance of righteousness and which God requires from us.

Even Noah did not force the people in his generation to pursue righteousness but only pointed to them, mean while he continued in pursuing the same (Hebrews 11:7, Genesis 6:9-22). Look at this scripture:

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteousness shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be up on him.

Ezekiel 18:20

It is time we all individually pursue righteousness as some one's righteousness cannot save us (Luke 13:1-5, Romans 12:21, 14:10-12, 1 Corinthians 3:13, Revelation 20:11-15).

Chapter 9

The cost of righteousness

Now for sure righteousness is costly as we have seen in the last chapter on the lives of those who pursued righteousness. But the greatest cost for righteousness was borne by Jesus Christ the Son of God so as to reconcile mankind with God and to bring righteousness to them.

WHO hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?
For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.
He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:1-6

Jesus as was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah had to go through all that bitter experience to pay the cost for our unrighteousness (iniquities) and to bring back righteousness to us which was lost at the Garden of Eden. A horrible and painful experience indeed! Jesus Christ had something to tell those who would be his followers in pursuing righteousness in life

And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and

sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:25-33

There is always a cost in pursuing righteousness and that applies to all and not just for some people only.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.
They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.
And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

John 16:1-3

Jesus told his disciples those words before he was crucified that persecutions await them after his departure back to the Father.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

John 16:33

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

And now I am no more in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them through thy truth: they word is truth:

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

John 17:9-21

Many people hate righteousness and love unrighteousness and are ready to oppose those who pursue righteousness and that is why Jesus prayed to God for his disciples and others that they will disciple, for God's protection.

And there came thither certain Jews from An'-ti-och and I-co'-ni-um, who persuaded the people,

and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Der'-be.

And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lys'-tra, and to I-co'-ni-um and An'-ti-och,

Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Acts 14:19-22

You can see for yourself from the above scripture that apostles Paul and Barnabas had to confirm the souls of the disciples at Lystra, Iconium and Antioch exhorting them to continue in the faith and that tribulation was inevitable in the Christian Walk.

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience;

Persecutions, afflictions which came unto me at An'-ti-och, at I-co'-ni-um at Lys'-tra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

2 Timothy 3:10-12

Apostle Paul went ahead to remind Timothy of all the troubles he went through as a minister of the gospel of Christ and encouraged him to remain steadfast in the faith assuring him of the Lord's protection.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:16-18

Suffering is inevitable for true Christians and it confirms that those who go through such shall be glorified too, just as Christ and God glorified him. One need to take heart going through the experience as it is temporary and not lasting forever.

And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; and David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions,

Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong,

waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment;

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

Hebrews 11:32-38

Those who pursued righteousness for God's sake experienced all the above hardships in life and the same is going to be experienced in our generation with those who follow their example wanting to please God rather than men (Acts 4:1-20; 5:1-25). Although it is going to cost them something for

some time, it is going to end sweetly in heaven for the rest of life, that is, eternally (1 Peter 1:6-9, Matthew 5:1-12, Revelation 22:10-14). Without accepting the salvation of Jesus Christ in order to be enabled to live holy and righteous life it will be costlier then as one will be judged by God who sent Jesus his Son to save mankind and therefore miss heaven and go to hell and be punished eternally (John 3:16-17, 36, Acts 4:12, Luke 13:1-5, Romans 3:21-24; Acts 6:23, 17:30-31, Hebrews 2:1-4, Revelation 20:11-15;. 21:7- 8). Please I advise you to choose righteousness.

The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

Psalm 37:12

The just (the righteous) suffer because the unjust (the wicked) gnash their teeth at them plotting to do evil to them as they did to Stephen as is recorded below.

Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

Acts 7:51-58

Stephen did not give up even at the point of death. How about you and me, are we going to give up? God forbid as we can miss entry into heaven. Let us remain unmoved as we have victory in the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior (Romans 8:28-39, 1 Corinthians 15:50-58, Revelation 12:10-11).

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you:

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers, of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy,

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

1 Peter 4:12-14

Although many of us Christians seem to be sorrowful in our sufferings, the above scripture encourages us to be happy and joyful instead just as was the case with the apostles in the early Church (Acts 5:27-42).

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;
And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.
For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;
Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

Philippians 1:27-30

God expects us not only to believe in his Son Jesus Christ, but to be ready also to suffer for his sake. We do suffer because we are a threat to Satan who is God's enemy and also are a threat to Satan's kingdom on earth and so he will see to it that we are persecuted in an effort to have us leave the faith in Christ Jesus and to miss our destination which is the holy city in heaven. The quality of a true believer in Christ Jesus is manifested in persecutions and opposition and which do acknowledge that one is walking with the Lord. Read on.

If the world hated you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.
If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.
Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have

persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

John 15:18-20

The scripture is quite true as all the scripture in the Holy Bible as you can see below.

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master and the servant as his lord.

If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

And fear them not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Are not two sparrows sold for a fathom? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 10:22-33

We have been strongly admonished in the above scripture we who have believed in Christ Jesus that we should not fear mortal men but God who is the possessor of heaven and earth. But unfortunately,

some of us fear them and don't dare to speak out the truth to them whenever necessary and for that many continue in life unperturbed of their wicked/sinful behavior. Some of us don't want others to know that we are associated with Christ. Then how do we expect to be acknowledged by Christ before the heavenly Father?

Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.
For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.
For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.
For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:
Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

1 Peter 2:18-25

And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

Having a good conscience; that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1 Peter 3:14-18

Apostle Peter also encouraged the Church of Christ to follow the footsteps of Christ' who also suffered for mankind to bring redemption and to give an opportunity for godly living once again after the fall in the garden of Eden through the first man Adam (Romans 5:12-21).

The following are examples of those who paid the cost of pursuing righteousness

- Abel (Genesis 4:1-8)

- Joseph (Genesis 37 & 39)
- Job (Job 1 & 2)
- Hananiah
- Mishael (Daniel 3)
- Azariah
- Daniel (Daniel 6)
- John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1-12)
- Stephen (Acts 6 & 7)
- James
- Peter Acts 12:1-11

- Paul Acts 16:16-40
- Silas Acts 16:16-40
- John (Revelation 1)

Chapter 10

A brief on my own life

In writing this chapter I had come to the realization that I need not be seen as a mere hypocrite but as an example to my readers by sharing my experience in life as well and being assisted with the scripture. But some of my experience are to follow after the following scriptures.

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments,

And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

And greetings in the markets and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

Matthew 23:18

The disciples of Jesus Christ are brethren and not Rabbi (chief teacher) and are expected to be humble and not proud or boastful but to be counted among the doers of the word of God (being truly righteous).

I hope you and me don't fall in the Lot of the scribes and the Pharisees who are in true sense just hypocrites.

But refuse profane and old wives fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

This is a faithful saying worthy of all acceptation.

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly unto them; that thy profiting may appear to all.
Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this though shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

1

1 Timothy 4:7-9, 15-16

As for me I will pursue only those things that are important to me now and in the future (the eternity) and nothing less, so to profit the most both now and in my eternity. That, the scripture tells me it is for my salvation and for the salvation of others who takes heed (ate serious in life and do fear God).

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 1:13

THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the fist began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

Hebrews 2:1-4

As for me I want to reach / attain the final salvation of my soul (Matthew 24:12-14, 2 Peter 1:10-11, 3:8-15). God forbid that I take heed of what people have said than what God had said than what God had said in the scripture which is sound doctrine. People's words can be mere fables, legends and heresies unlike the word of God which is infallible

and unchangeable and lasts forever (2 Samuel 22:21, Psalms 12:6, 119:89, Proverbs 12:19, Isaiah 40:8, Matthew 5:18, 24:35, 1 Peter 1:25).
God is serious and if you thought his word is not important in life then you are in for a shock going by this scripture: John 5:30-47.

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,
Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Titus 2:7-8

I have seen in this country that many are not sincere and also have taken corruption as a normal thing in life and hardly see how abnormal immoral/sinful it is in actual fact. Many if you point to them that corruption is sin, they point at others saying 'Even so and so is doing it (some people in senior position in the society) how about me!? They have forgotten that God the Creator is not a respecter of persons

and is going to judge / punish all sin and that what they have chosen as normal in life (corruption) is the wrong way and leads to destruction (Proverbs 14:12, 16:25, Matthew 7:13, 2 Peter 2:15, Revelation 20:11,13). Please be advised accordingly by God through the wisest human being ever as is recorded in the scripture, Solomon the son of David (1 Kings 3:7-12): Proverbs 8:13, 10:2, 27, 11:4, 19, 12:28, 13:11, 14:32, 15:27.

Now let me turn to my personal experience on some that I still can remember.

- When I was still in employment many times when I was given cash for purchasing materials for my Institution, and now and then I would remain with some cash as I used to negotiate the prizes in the market. What I used to do with the cash was to return them and hand them over to the cashier, who would give me a receipt for the cash returned. I understand only few officers did that and at some point, a cashier

told my spouse, that somehow I was foolish, to be returning back cash as it was not the norm with many officers they gave cash to go buy their requirements and spend also for other official purposes.

- While still in employment and as I was working in the supplies and procurement department, at times monthly or bi-monthly I used to go to procure drugs and other hospital materials and sometimes I had both a purchase order and cash as well for buying some other items with. At one time a supplier wanted to give me some good discount on the purchase where I used cash and told me that I keep the cash discount to myself but she was going to give a receipt for the materials including the discount. I disagreed with her that she do write in the receipt exactly what I have paid for and any cash I remain with from the discount I am going to return to my Institution and not

keep to myself as it is tantamount to unfaithfulness what she proposed to me.

- While still in employment I purchased some drugs for our pharmacy and the supplier gave me an envelope which was already sealed saying it is my invoice. When I went back and opening the envelope was both an invoice and a big bank note. It was an inducement of course and I did not use it for that reason but did dispose it in my own way (no need to disclose, not a cent went for my personal gain).
- While still in employment, many suppliers approached me when I gave them an order to supply materials, gave me cash which I returned to them. They used to say it is for my lunch. That to me is nothing but a bribe to induce me to continue bringing them some business. If they were my relatives, close friends or fellow Christian I would understand but as for suppliers, they have

their agenda which is business, business and business.

- While still in employment, one supplier came with my boss and I am told he was giving every staff an envelope saying it is a Christmas gift. At the time I was in another office where I work and a fellow staff came to me and handed me an envelope and I asked him ‘What is this?’ and he narrated to me what had conspired. I returned back to him saying ‘I don’t need it’ (as I knew it was an inducement for us to favor him with orders against other suppliers).
- While still in employment, one time a supplier delivered some substandard materials and as I was there at the time to receive materials from suppliers, I totally rejected the consignment and told him so and he got angry and went to report to my boss. They came him and my boss and my boss instructed me to receive the materials and I gave him my reservations and refused

to sign the delivery note for the materials which my boss did probably because of embarrassment and ordered me to hand over my duties to another staff and immediately transferred me to Stock Control section next to his office away from the warehouses.

- While still in employment, and heading supplies and procurement department, I told all the staff working under me after summoning them, that I am a born again Christian and was not going to defend any staff who engages in fraudulent crafty activities and is found guilty as I can't entertain any form of malpractice. Later on one of my staff was given cash to go purchase a computer consumable and he came with the product with a receipt for it the amount which was almost two and a half times the actual prize and after immediately taking up the matter and confirming in the market even where he

bought it that truly it was inflated, I reported the matter directly to the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Authority for action. My director got word of my action and severely reprimanded me in his office in the presence of a Security officer and an Administrator that I by passed him. He further ordered the Security officer to throw me out of the gate of the Institution. I told him the case was beyond him as it was criminal and the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission was the right organization to handle it. later I came to understand he wrote a very bad letter to Head office on my conduct. At the time I had earlier sent my application there for a promotion which was long overdue and I followed up with phone calls and letters in vain and at some time even visited the Head office and was never promoted and I later retired from employment without any promotion though many staff in my cadre were being

promoted over the years. The Administrator was not for the Director's instruction and told the security officer outside the office to ignore the instruction and told me to go back to my office.

- One day I went to a hands office for a service and I was told to pay some money (a bribe) to be given a form and refused and told the staff to give me the telephone for the head office to confirm if the money was official (legal) and it is when was later served.
- One day I needed my original High school examination certificate with a view to photo copying and sending my application somewhere but I looked for it in the house and could not get it. I don't know how I misplaced it or lost it and decided to write to the examinations council for assistance and they told me they cannot issue another certificate and advised me to report to any police station of the loss so as to be given

an abstract. I then went to one police station and they asked for a bribe to serve me calling it “tea”, but I told them what for? Later they realized I cannot part with any money for the service and had to serve me accordingly.

- One day I boarded a public vehicle (a bus) and as it was full with passengers, I reached my destination and alighted before the conductor reaching me for the fare. The next day I waited for the bus at the same time I alighted the other day and when the bus came, I told him what transpired and paid him my fare.
- Still on different account I have visited land office for a service and they asked for a bribe and I publicly rebuked the whole hand board committee with their Chairman and they ended serving me at long last as I proved quite a nuisance in the office.
- One day I boarded a motorbike to take me to some town and we came to a Police road

block and they were demanding for bribes from both motorists and motorcycle riders. I told the rider never to give anything to them and when we stood our ground, they let us go and by then I had crammed the number of the police officer which is normally on the shirt shoulder and went and reported the matter to Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission.

- I have been traveling a lot and got fed up of the habit of traffic officers taking bribes from motorists and not so much caring about the state of the vehicle and the passengers and at one time severely rebuked a traffic police officer after looking keenly at how was moving. I said it was sin for them to be taking bribes and God will surely judge them. Later after leaving the other passengers asked me ‘Can’t you fear even the police?” I told them I fear nobody but God only and what the traffic officers are doing is unlawful and sinful as well.

- One day I went to a bank to withdraw cash and the teller gave me extra cash and I gave her saying, ‘I am a born again Christian and cannot take what is not mine’.
- One day I went to a hands valuation officer and when he saw parcel of land I was buying was big meaning I was to pay many thousands of shillings on stamp duty tax he tried to bring a suggestion that we can talk as I was going to pay so much on land tax!? I brushed him off and said I am going to pay the whole valuation amount. I straight knew he wanted a bribe from me so as to undervalue the land.
- One day before I got employment and was busy looking for a job, someone told me he can get me the form to fill for application to be employed as untrained teacher. The person was in touch with Education officials. He wanted me to part with some money and for sure I dropped the idea as I did not want to be involved in corruption.

- At one time I wanted to be connected with electricity at my home and an employee told me I pay him some amount of money so that he can see to it that I pay less money for connection, I refused.
- One day I went to a High School to ask for permission to go and preach to the students on their Sunday service and I was granted. When I finally went and preached, after the service the School patron gave me some amount of money saying it the policy of the school to be paying preachers who come to the school to preach. I refused to take it and told him I can only accept some hospitality but not money for preaching to the students.
- One day I boarded a bus and gave out a five hundred shillings note and my fare was to be one hundred shillings so I expected to get four hundred shillings as my change. Later the conductor gave me a change of nine hundred shillings probably he thought I had given him a thousand shillings note. I

returned to him five hundred shillings and told him I only gave out a five hundred shillings note and that I am a born again Christian and cannot take what does not belong to me.

- On several accounts I cannot remember the number have told bus drivers and conductors not to give the traffic police money as it is bribery and sin and if they don't stop the practice God will judge them including the traffic officers who take the bribes.

Let me finish by this scripture which the Lord God gave to the children of Israel and by extension to all people on earth to observe.

Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Deuteronomy 16:19-20

As for me, I want to inherit a city, a good and wonderful city, that is, Heaven. How about you?

Chapter 11

The end product of righteousness

In this chapter we are going to see from the Holy Scripture what happens in the end after making all efforts in life in doing righteousness here on earth.

Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.
He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;
The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;
The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.
As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.
The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 13:36-43

The righteous in the end will be in the kingdom of God (their Father) in heaven shining like the sun, how sweet it is! And Jesus Himself is the one who said it and he is not a liar.

Thou hast a few names even in Sar'-dis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Revelation 3:4-6

All those that have been called by the Lord have been given a garment each one of them (a white clean garment) but unfortunately some will defile their garments those who fail to walk in righteousness and holiness and therefore will not have overcome sin and will miss eternity into the wedding supper of the Lamb.

But for those few in the body of Christ who pursued and walked in righteousness and holiness they will be found worthy before the Lord and shall be clothed in white (Revelation 19:6-8) and shall walk with the Lord step by step beside him as they have overcome just as the Lord overcame.

Those will be with the Lord for ever and ever in heaven. Remember the case of Noah who although lived in a wicked world here on earth, yet he believed in God fearing him and lived in righteousness and for that, God saw him worthy and walked with him (Genesis 6:5-9). Noah became heir in the kingdom of God (Hebrews 11:7)

We have found above that all called by the Lord each one of them was given a wedding garment to

prepare and be ready for the wedding banquet when the Lord comes back to take His holy Church with him into heaven but not all will be taken!!! (Matthew 22:14). Why is it so? The answer we already saw in some of the explanations above that they chose to walk in unrighteousness (those who will fail to enter into the rapture). Now what was wrong with them? Let us look at these scriptures.

And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Job 28:28

We find in the above scripture what is lacking in many of us and that is wisdom followed by understanding (these two are bed fellows) We fail to fear God and end up in sin as a result (Proverbs 1:7) and that has been our undoing (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). Now what did Jesus say?

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

And while they went to buy the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord open to us.

But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 25:1-13

Born-again Christians are the light of the world just as Jesus is and need to begin to shine on this earth by their good deeds (righteousness) and need continue with the same unto the end as Christ is only familiar with righteousness as he is righteous just as his Father (Matthew 5:14-16, 20; John 8:12, Galatians 6:7-10, Titus 2:11-14). Those that will fail to practice righteousness on a daily basis will be shocked just as those five foolish virgins mentioned above as wisdom is not an outward talk only but an outward action too, and which is from the heart (Matthew 7:21-27). Born-again Christians are expected to build on Christ (the Word of God) by obeying the word of God for them to be able to pass the test of life to be with the Lord forever in

the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 7:24-27, 1Corinthians 3:11-13).

Therefore it is not in vain to live a righteous and holy life here on earth, which is full of all kinds of wickedness (unrighteousness) as the Lord Jesus Christ will see to it that you are well rewarded in the kingdom of his Father (Matthew 19:16-29, Revelation 22:12-13; 3:11-13).

And when they had preached the gospel to the city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lys'-tra, and to I- co'-ni-um, and An'-ti-och, Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Acts 14:21-23

Those were apostles Paul and Barnabas who were at work in those cities encouraging those who had

believed the gospel of Jesus Christ that they continue (remain) in the faith despite the many challenges they will face in life and in the end (finally) they will enter into the kingdom of God (which is in heaven) where God dwells.
When one receives God's salvation which is in Christ Jesus one is made righteous as the word of God is good seed in one who has received Christ and it brings forth righteous fruits.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.
For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.
For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.
For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:12-18

Apostle Paul in writing the above epistle to the church in Rome was encouraging the brethren there to live righteously (in the Spirit) and not by the flesh (body) and that in their sufferings as Christians they are partakers of the same experience Jesus had and above all in the end they will be glorified together with Jesus when he comes for them and that the sufferings cannot be compared to all the goodness awaiting them.

THIS know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.

Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Now as Jan'-nes and Jam'-bres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience,

Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at An'-ti-och, at I-co'-ni-um, and at Lys'-tra; what

persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

2 Timothy 3:1-12

Apostle Paul was telling his son in the faith Timothy of what would come to pass in the future and that he need to be wary of them and to follow his footsteps of living righteously (godly) during the time and that God is faithful to deliver him in all those and in finishing he tells him the following:-

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing,

2 Timothy 4:7-8

Now there is also a crown for the righteous prepared by the Lord by those who keep their faith intact despite the hardships in life and it is never in vain to live godly here on earth.

Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.
Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the begging shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.
And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.
These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.
But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not any man to teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.
If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

1 John 2:23-29

Apostle John in writing to the Church (body of believers in Christ Jesus) he tells them to remain in Jesus (in righteousness) as God has promised it eternal life. Now that, is the end product of righteousness, that is, eternal life in heaven with the Lord.

AND after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor and power, unto the Lord our God:
For true and righteous are his judgements: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.
And again they said, Alleluia.

And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, A'-men; Alleluia.

And a voice came out of the throne saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed, in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

And he saith unto me, Write,

Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Revelation19:1-9

What will happen in the near future as is recorded above Jesus talked about it when he saw the great faith of the centurion as recorded in the book of Matthew (Matthew 8:5-11). The kingdom of God needs faith in God which brings righteousness and which lead to entering heaven to be with the Lord eternally. It all begins with faith (John 3:16, Romans 10:6-13, Ephesians 2:8-10, Colossians 2:4-10, 1 Thessalonians 5:15-24, 2 Timothy 3:14-17, Titus 2:11-14, Hebrews 11:6-16; 12:1-14, 1 Peter 1:1-16, 1 John 3:1-3; 5:1-5; 3 John 3-4; 11:12, Jude 17-21). Likewise, it must end with faith. You have seen now that those who entered heaven and were in the marriage supper of the Lamb were all righteous people and that is why righteousness cannot be taken as a small thing in life as it counts most in God's kingdom and to live right before God is to live forever with God if one is in Christ Jesus who is our righteousness.

AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all their tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of water of life freely.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

And the foundation of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

The fifth, Sardonix; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple there of it.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.

And there shall be in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh

abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 21

It is equally important for us to get to know how those who were made righteous and lived righteously where they will spend their eternity with God. For sure it is quite magnificent! Now what next?

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Revelation 22:12-14

Those are the words of Jesus to the Church (the saints). There is a reward for the righteous of God based on each one's work here on earth. Those who

are blessed are those who did righteousness by obeying God’s commandments.

Notes of the reader

I take this opportunity to thank you for reading this book. If you had not been saved (born again) before, you have noticed that you cannot be righteous before God by your own efforts or power but by God's power. If you now want to be saved so as to have God's power in you to make you righteous then repeat this prayer with all sincerity of heart. "Lord Jesus, I have read your word and have realized I cannot be righteous by myself except by you. Today and now I come to you as a sinner and repent of all my sins, please forgive me and save me cleansing my heart with your precious blood that you shed on the cross and send me the Holy Spirit to help me live a righteous life. I ask all this believing in your holy name, Amen":

If you have done so join a Bible based church and ask to be water baptized.

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