# GOD REWARDS YOU FOR ACKNOWLEDGING HIM

**God will provide, protect, defend and keep you safe from all hidden dangers and deadly diseases.**

**By Felix Indure**

**God Rewards You for Acknowledging Him: God Will Provide, Protect, Defend and Keep You Safe from All Hidden Dangers and Deadly Diseases** is a book intended to help readers reach their full potential. It inculcates discipline in the reader to obey natural laws and the Creator of the laws. One is successful by obeying the laws rather than striving against them; like in a popular nursery rhyme, one has to row his boat gentle down the stream, merrily. That is why we have people struggling in life while others are living effortlessly.

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# Dedication

This book is dedicated to my grandmother Teresa Osagi Induri who always told me to Read and See and reminded me to respect my father and mother that it may go well with me, and I may live a long time on earth. To my mother Agnes Jepngetich for her unwavering struggle to ensure my sisters and I got a footing in our lives and my sisters Patricia, Abigael and Christine who were supportive, obedient and made our family a haven.

# Acknowledgements

The accounts in this book are true, I have changed some names that appear in this book to protect the privacy of the concerned persons. I am sincerely thankful to all who facilitated the completion of this book.

Unless otherwise indicated, Bible quotations in this book are from The Good News Bible.

# Introduction

God's invisible qualities, both his eternal power and his divine nature, can be seen evidently by observing our surroundings. His principles are apparent in the things that He created. Consequently, no one has any justification of not knowing God and his principles.

Engineers have taken a cue from the environment and imitated most of God's creation. For instance, the submarines, the aeroplanes and speed cars have a streamlined body to mimic the fish and migratory birds. By imitating God's creatures, these machines can move very fast and counter the opposing force known as friction. As a result, the laws governing nature that God has put in place are beneficial to us if we live by their principles. If you watch ants, you will learn about hard work, if you watch termites, you will learn about controlling your thoughts, if you watch bees you will learn about the power of giving and if you watch animals/plants you will learn about love or quid pro quo relationships - give and take.

But you can learn more plainly about God by studying his word the Bible. Since human beings have the most advanced communication skills, those who desire to know more about His principles can study His word. If you desire to know more, God has said, 'I will teach you the way you should go; I will instruct you and advise you'.

For that reason, instead of spending a lot of time studying God's principle from the environment, which may not be so obvious, you can glean a lot by reading the Bible. The Bible will prepare you in life, instruct you and ensure you live effortlessly. You are able to counter easily the challenges you face in life as literally God trains you for the battle, so that you can use the strongest bow.

One of those challenges is that persons will try to snatch the rewards God has given you. The world has invested so much on security to secure people's property mainly from theft and vandalism. Sometimes it is a challenge to protect ones wealth when those in power use their authority to snatch ones wealth. Like in the biblical times, Jezebel (Queen) killed Naboth so that her husband Ahab (King) would take possession of his vineyard which he refused to sell to him. Not only can ones antagonists try to take the rewards God has given you, but poor beliefs rooted in superstition can prevent you from amassing wealth.

While it is easy to deal with thieves, it may not be easy to deal with people in authority (like Jezebel) using the law to steal from you and our tainted thoughts limiting us to acquire wealth. But be assured God's blessings makes one rich and adds no pain with it. If he gives you wealth as a reward, he will protect it for you. He will wade off reward snatchers. Another challenge is that sometimes it takes time to get our reward for living within God's principle. Then we need to know about seasons, God will reward you in the right season. He has promised, 'It may seem

slow in coming but wait for it; it will certainly take place and it will not be delayed'

The advantage of the reward God gives us for acknowledging Him is that he will also shield us from danger, he will protect us from reward snatchers and in the event he allows them to snatch, he will replace it several times and you will be at peace since you have stored your wealth in heaven where no thieves break to steal or moths destroy.

You will always be emotionally and spiritually stable as in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, you will be presenting your requests to God. His peace, which transcends all understanding, will always guard your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus. No harm will overtake you; no disaster will come near your house, for He will command his angels to guard you in all your ways.

Therefore, whatever you are doing for the sake of God's name in truth as opposed to hypocrisy, rest assured he shall repay you back. But do not wait for Him to pay you unspecified payments, ask Him what you want. If you are ready to receive it, he will give it to you. If you are not ready, he will give it to your children and grandchildren. The blessing of God makes one rich and adds no pain to it. Therefore he will withhold something if you have not prepared yourself to receive it. If you are not ready to receive something, it would be painful to you rather than a blessing.

## Chapter 1
## Nature will teach you God's principles, no one has an excuse of forfeiting God's rewards

***"Ever since God created the world, His invisible qualities, both his eternal power and his divine nature, have been clearly seen; they are perceived in the things that God made. So people have no excuse at all" – Romans 1:20***

**Ants teach us the benefits of hard work, saving and taking care of our families**

Ants come in different types. There are big ones, there are small ones. There are those that smell, there are those that are odourless. There are those that are useful, there are those that are destructive. There are those that sting painfully there are those that do not sting. There are those that bite, and you feel pain only when they are biting and there are those that do not bite.

I liked to watch ants. Every time you would see them, they would be busy carrying food, plant and animal remains. Most of

the time an ant did it alone, but when the load was heavy, ants worked as a team to move the load. They also might have had a communication mechanism. One ant would spot a lump of food, the next minute you would see a swarm of ants coming to attack the food as if they were sure and 'saw' the food being placed there for them.

Among the big ants, they either had a pungent smell, bit or stung painfully. I later learned this was a defensive mechanism since they were a delicacy to many predators including man. An ant could smell nastily when touched, and the predator would leave it alone due to the smell. If it had no smell, it could fight back by stinging the predator painfully. The venom from stinging ant was also used for hunting. It paralysed the prey, usually other crawling insects.

Small ants were generally odourless, unless they were many in their nest. They were the most useful of ants as they pollinated flowers like bees. In search for nectar they could carry pollen that stuck on their bodies and rub it on the stigma on their way out of the flower.

The destructive ants were farmers. They farmed aphids and mealy bugs. They derived food from aphids and mealy bugs' excreta and in turn the aphids and mealy bugs were protected. These ants were destructive since they encouraged massive quantity of pests to attack crops leading to stunted crops and even wilting. Notwithstanding my own grouping of ants into

useful and destructive ones, they all played a useful role in cleaning the environment of carcases and food remains.

Ants could live anywhere. Most of them lived in the ground, but they could live in crevices, between tree barks, between leaves and anywhere they could hibernate. Traditionally we were encouraged to be stung at least once in a month by an ant as this increased immunity to diseases. But this was absolutely unnecessary. Our houses were made of earthen floor and we got stung by the ants regularly. Ants were part of us and we did not see them as a menace as such, and I am sure the biting and immunity part were lies crafted to enable us view the ants favourably.

Apart from gathering and storing food in their nest for difficult times, the food was used for breeding new ants. Some eggs laid by the female ants were selected by the ants. Once they hatched, they were fed special food which resulted to winged ants. These ants were held captive in the nest till the rainy season. I may not know the reason for these but I guess it was because the ground was soft for them to burrow and food was plenty to prevent them dying of hunger.

One month after the onset of the wet season, that is, April every year, the winged ants would be released. They would fly around looking for a partner. The male was usually small in size and the female large in size. The male would be carried by the female

then they would drop to the ground shed their wings, burrow in the ground and start producing new ants.

However it was not pleasurable as it seems. Most flying ants were eaten by birds, other small animals and human beings. We ate particular ants, the biggest ones, who their un-winged counterpart produced pungent smell to protect themselves. A common factor about all ants was that they were always busy and organized. They did not have a leader. Watching them made me appreciate the saying, **"Lazy people should learn a lesson from the way ants live. They have no leader, chief, or ruler, but they store up their food during the summer getting ready for winter. How long is the lazy man going to lie in bed? When is he ever going to get up? 'I'll just take a short nap', he says; 'I'll just fold my hands and rest a while'. But while he sleeps, poverty will attack him like an armed robber".**

Ants give any parents an opportunity to inculcate the statutes of God in their children's mind. Tracy (2010) advices that children are very susceptible to the lessons they receive from the important people in their lives as they are growing up. They accept what their parents say as a fact, as an absolute truth. Children watch their parents and strive to emulate the values that they not only teach and preach, but also practice.

Once these values are "programmed" into ones subconscious, they create a propensity within one to behave consistently with

those values when the situation requires them. From Tracy's notion, we understand that children are gullible to take the values taught by their parents especially if they are consistent with their actions and how they live. The Bible is emphatic that teach your children when **'you are working'**, implying that a parents actions matters a lot. When working in the fields, the ant could provide an anchor to teach the values of hard work and saving ones income; they have no leader, chief, or ruler, but they store up their food during the summer getting ready for winter.

A lesson for parents from ants is that they carefully take care of their young ones. They know such food will result to winged ants and such food to normal un-winged ants. Parents should also carefully nurture their children ensuring they develop into persons they wish.

## Termites teach us the benefits of controlling our thoughts and what comes out of us

A similar insect that got me fascinated looking at it was the termite. Unlike ants which had no leader, termites seemed to have some leadership. There were workers, who did all the chores. There were soldiers who protected the queen, king and workers. The queen was the most special of the termite and she was more than twenty times the biggest ant in the nest. She was thoroughly protected in a maze of the nest build by workers.

The nest was made from organic matter the termite had fed on, mostly wood. The nest was protected by a mould of soil the termite had egested mixed with a special hue from their body to make it waterproof. The nest was self ventilating such that even though it could be several feet under the soil, the termites would never die of suffocation or overheating.

Just like ants, termites came in various varieties. It was amazing to learn that God made animals according to their kinds. I will only classify termites into two, though I saw numerous types. This is because in spite of the various types, termites were either edible or non edible. A common characteristic of edible termites was that they surrounded wood or dead matter from outside. Then they protected themselves by a soil crust they build around the wood and munched it away. It was easy to see that wood or any other organic matter had been attacked by the termites. This characteristic made them vulnerable to attacks by predators. For instance, chicken would just scratch away the crust and feast on them.

The non edible termites were most peculiar since they executed their plan invisibly. In attacking wood and other matter, they burrowed themselves inside the wood munched its content and filled back the spaces with mud. You would not see the damage going on till the wind brought down the wood that you would realise it had been eaten away by termites. They were the most destructive termites since they also attacked living plants. The

edible termites only attacked dead organisms or the dead parts of the barks of live trees.

Like ants, termites selected some eggs, fed the larvae on special food. These termites developed wings and were confined in the nest until the wet season was so advanced. Our wet season started in March, so the winged termites would be released in between June and September. The activity was like clockwork that it was easy to trap them for food and not many survived.

Between June and September, if it rained the previous day, we could go in fields and search for termites' activity, especially where we believed a termites' nest existed. You could see the workers opening tiny holes ready to come out. We would then construct a domed structure over the area with sticks. We would cover the structure with blankets or anything that made the domed structure dark inside. We would leave a small rounded opening that we covered with a transparent polythene paper.

Before the polythene paper, we would dig a hole the size of a big jug and made the sides of the hole slippery with banana leaves. Then we waited patiently. By ten in the morning, the workers would have widened the tiny holes, but they would be nervous to come out, always running back into the nest when they see anything outside but never closing the holes.

By noon, the holes would be even wider but stationed at the mouth of the holes, were soldier termites ready to attack anything that wanted to enter the hole. By one thirty in the afternoon, the soldiers came out of the holes followed by a few workers and they roamed about the surface of the earth. At the mouth of the hole, you could see few winged termites peering outside in company of workers but nervous to get out. At exactly two in the afternoon, most workers and winged termites started getting out of the holes. Winged termites got out of their holes in droves by half past two.

The workers only escorted the winged termites and left them to face their fate. Since the inside of the dome was dark, the winged termites would be attracted by the light from the round hole left in the dome structure. As they approached the light, they would fall into the hole. They would be unable to climb out and they would keep pilling and when the hole was almost full with them, we would scope them and put them in a container with a lid and waited for the hole to fill again and repeat the process.

At about three in the evening, the workers retraced their steps back into their holes. They were followed by the soldiers. By four in the evening all workers were inside their holes and any winged termites that were unable to get out would be restrained inside till it rains next time. June to September was a light rainy season so it never rained every day. But when it rained, it rained heavily. The average gap was four days. Therefore every four

days we could be trapping winged termites in our dome structure. By four in the evening, the workers would have sealed off their holes with mud waiting for the next rain if the nest still had more winged termites.

The termites we trapped would then be dry fried with some salt sprinkled on them since the insects were fatty. We would roast them till the wings disappeared and they became dry and crispy. The delicacy would be eaten alone as a snack or used as vegetable for another meal called Ugali. As the insects were oily and crunchy, they could be stored in a cool dry place for about six months making it a versatile meal. However, they were so delicious that we could not afford storing them; we munched them away like a main meal.

Not all winged termites followed the timelines I have described above. The non-edible ones flew from their holes at six in the evening whenever it rained the previous day and it was not raining at six in the evening and it had not rained at least three hours before six. It usually rained between three and five in the afternoon in my area. This made the rate of survival of the non edible winged termites high. Most birds had retired to their nests, so their main predator was bats. Non-edibles termites flew from their colony throughout the year whenever it rained the previous day. But since it rained almost every day in March to May, they did not come out of their holes regularly during the period.

We had one variety of edible termites that came out of their hole at six in the evening whenever it rained the previous day. What distinguished them from the non-edible one was the size. The non-edible ones were tiny. Another feature was that the non-edible ones had no soldier termites while the edible one had soldiers. And lastly the period the edible ones came out of their nest was restricted to September and October and occasional between November and February if it ever rained. Though this was our dry season, hence it rarely rained.

We had still another variety of edible and non-edible winged termites that came out of their holes when it had rained heavily and it was then drizzling. They were all black winged. Their wings were black in colour. The edible ones were large and the non-edible ones tiny. These varieties could be seen throughout the year whenever it rained heavily followed by a drizzle, or whenever it drizzled continuously for hours. However, they came out of their holes only during the day, at any time of the day.

Lastly we had an edible variety, which was the goliath of winged termites as it was thrice the size of other edible varieties. These termites only came out of their holes at midnight whenever it rained the previous day and it had not rained between seven in the evening and midnight. The period for these termites was between June and October. We trapped them by lighting a kerosene lamp and placing it outside. We had no electricity. A swarm of these termites would circle the lamp till they got tired,

dropped their wings and stayed at the base of the lamp, hiding under each other. Early in the morning, we scooped them and prepared them like the other termites.

Winged termites after exiting their nests, they had what I call the 'wedding dance'. For the termites that left their nests between two and three in the afternoon, they chose the tallest tree facing the sun. They must have had a powerful instinct for they only left their nest when it won't rain that day and it would be sunny and it was always so. Then they would dance making spiral like movements. Termites from numerous nests would meet here dance and dance. In the course of the dance a male termite attached itself to the female, the female was larger and the male was smaller. Then the female would let itself fall since it was heavy to continue with the dance. The termites fell in all directions and they could fall ranging from a few metres to several kilometres from the venue of the dance. When they reached the ground, the two dropped their wings, burrowed in the ground and a new termite colony was underway.

The termites exposed themselves to predators during this dance and even when they were still burrowing themselves, and since their numbers were in millions, many survived the predators. Other evening and night termites had their dance under any source of light including the tallest tree under the full moon.

Regardless of the type of the termite, one denominator holds true for all of them, they are weak animals that can cause

gigantic damage. Similarly, their little efforts cumulatively amount to much. Clear (2018) explains that it is human nature to follow the law of least effort, which states that when deciding between two similar options, people would naturally gravitate towards the option that requires the least amount of work. That is why it is written that **'train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it' –KJV.**

The little efforts God or your parents put in to teach you good values over time will amount to great things, similarly ignoring the values and practising bad values secretly is like hiding a little leaven in a lump of dough which makes the whole dough raise. A lesson from termites is that small efforts can both be beneficial to us or destructive to us depending on the direction of the efforts; and once we have accumulated the efforts over time it is difficult to unlearn them. What one has done over time is the easiest route he will follow faced with a decision.

When termites abandoned a nest or they were negligent enough to allow rain water to seep into the nest, mushroom grew. We often harvested wild mushrooms in the month of April. The rains were so intense that it caused termites to desert a nest and start a new one or water found its way into the nest but it wasn't such a nuisance to cause termites to dump it. Depending on the type of the termite, the mushrooms were either edible or unfit for human consumption. Eating inedible termites did not kill a person but it had been reported they ran crazy and their brain impaired for life, however eating non edible mushrooms made

one to give up the ghost. Non edible termites nest produced poisonous mushrooms. Edible termites' nests produced mushroom suitable for eating.

Luckily the mushrooms were coloured and sized, it was easy to distinguish between those fit for consumption and those that were uneatable. The head of the mushroom always assumed the colour of the head of the soldier termite. The size of the mushroom was directly related to the size of the winged termite. I don't know the reason behind it but it was true. The soldiers' termites head for those edible termites that left their holes at two in the afternoon and six in the evening were golden brown in colour; therefore the mushrooms heads were golden brown in colour. The soldiers' head of those termites that left their nest when it was drizzling and those that did at midnight were grey in colour. Therefore, their mushrooms' head were grey in colour. For that of the midnight termite, the size of the mushroom was thrice the size of any wild edible mushroom. It was the most colossal mushroom. Poisonous mushroom were tiny. They appeared in pure white or grey colour. There was an edible white mushroom that grew on cow dung, but it was not tiny, it was the size of other standard mushrooms.

Jesus said there is nothing that goes into a person from the outside which can make him ritually unclean. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that makes him unclean. For from the inside, from a person's heart, come the evil ideas which lead him to do immoral things, to rob, kill, commit adultery, be

greedy, and all sorts of evil things; deceit, indecency, jealousy, slander, pride and folly – all these evil things come from inside a person and made him unclean. How pertinently are these verses! Just imagine all termites eat the same wood and organic matter. Then they fabricate the digested wood into special food for certain larvae and the other part they use to build their nest.

The outcome is a nest that produces edible or poisonous mushrooms and edible or uneatable winged termites; from the same wood and organic matter! Byrne (2016) says, "Think good thoughts. Speak good works. Take good actions. Three steps that will bring more to you than you can ever imagine". Paul resonates with Byrne when he exhorts, **"in conclusion, my brothers and sisters, fill your mind with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely and honourable"**. When we fill our minds with honourables things God promises that, **'Just as the Lord your God promised your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He will give you a land with large and prosperous cities which you did not put in them, and there will be wells that you did not dig and vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant**...'.

Notice that just thinking of honourable thoughts, teaching them to children when at home or away-working or resting, repeat thinking on them, writing them on door posts and gates, gave one prosperity, one inherited wells, vineyards and olive orchards he never worked for. Ones thoughts would therefore determine

if he would be happy or sad, if he would be rich or poor. In other words, this is comparable to termites that would produce edible termites and gigantic mushrooms, or tiny poisonous termites and mushrooms because of what goes on in their bodies.

## God will reward you in the right seasons

As I said earlier we had a rainy season between March and October and a dry season between November and February. Sometimes if we are left to our own devices we could destroy ourselves. That is why God puts laws in place to guide us. Farming was done for some months, and then nature forced us to leave the land furrow for some months. This allowed the land to regain fertility. We all knew our faming activities were during March to October, in November to February, the ground was too dry for farming, the only crops that thrived were cassava and sweet potatoes and they must have been planted two months to the dry season, that is, in September to allow them develop a root system that would sustain them in the drought period.

The drought period was not a pleasant period. It was windy and hot, it was common to catch air borne diseases. It's a period aphids and mealy bugs thrived and destroyed crops by wilting them. The water in streams reduced and some dried altogether. If one dwelled on the negative, he would not have seen any good in this period. Thankfully it was a period that made us enjoy all the food we were to obtain in the rainy season. Ants

were breeding in their hide out. Termites were busy munching away any wood and organic matter to give us winged termites and mushrooms in the rainy season. Moles and other burrowing animals were busy aerating the soil underground. Other animals like toads, millipede and centipede hibernated into inactivity.

It was the period we prepared land in readiness of the rainy season. We had a very troublesome grass known as couch grass. It was the most difficult weed to eradicate and it reduced farm produce by almost two thirds. Dry season land preparation paved way in totally annihilating the grass at least till we had harvested the major crops. This preparation also ensured all other weeds dried completely and formed vital organic manure. The rainy season started with thunderstorms and lightening that turned nitrogen gas into nitric acid that fertilized our lands.

The dry season was a catalyst for most fruit plants to start flowering, avocadoes, oranges, mangoes and tamarind fruits all flowered one month before the rainy season that is in February. The same period forced some fruits to mature, pineapples, bananas, pawpaw, guavas and jack fruits matured a months into the dry season. Weeds were prompted to start flowering and produce millions of seeds in dry season. Most trees were developing an elaborate rooting system during dry season; they then grew by leaps in the rainy season.

David confidently stated, '' **they** *(happy people)* **are like trees that grow besides a stream, that bear fruit at the right time,**

**and whose leaves do not dry up. They succeed in everything they do**." Surely no one understands seasons better than David. He was the lesser son of Jesse. Jesse had paraded his seven sons to be anointed by Samuel but God rejected them. To Jesse, he had completed presenting all the sons until Samuel asked, "have you any more sons?" he answered there was the youngest who was taking care of sheep. That was the one God chose.

David had later to run away from Saul who intended to kill him. Even as a fugitive, he bore good fruits as he saved the town of Keilah from Philistines, protected Nabal's stock from theft and when he got chances to exterminate Saul, he did not kill him. He passed through trying times when his first child with Bathsheba died and Absalom his son made a coup on him. But all these seasons prepared him to be the greatest King ever, a man after God's own heart. When he wrote Psalms one, he understood during drought leaves wither, but since a person that trust God (a river) has his roots (soul) watered by the river so he does not give up in life in face of its challenges, but when he has overcome the challenges, he only thrives (bears fruits). Therefore trusting God to reward you for following his principles means sometimes circumstances beyond your control would hold you stagnant, but never give up, draw strength from God and move on.

Like if you remember the dry season we had, it stopped all farming activities. Things may have looked stagnant but it

actually stopped us from over cultivating our lands to give the land rest to rejuvenate itself. We were never worried of the drought season for we knew it was just a season. David gave us a good example of maintaining a good attitude in such seasons by wholly relying on God. We should never be troubled; a fruitful season would always replace the famine.

**Bees teach us the benefit of giving**

Before a tree bears fruits it must produce flowers. Bees play a big role in aiding the flowers to develop into fruits. World Wide Fund for nature states that almost 90% of wild plants and 75% of leading crops depend on animal pollination. One out of every three mouthful of our food depends on pollinators such as bees. Crops that depend on pollination are five times more valuable than those that do not. Social bees such as honeybees and bumblebees often live in hives or nests, above or below the ground, while most solitary bees nest in the ground. Bees can be found in so many locations, some surprising. These include marshes, shingle, sand dunes, soft cliffs, heath lands, wetlands, chalk, grasslands, quarries, gravel pits, sea walls and even post-industrial land.

Honey bees have a dance move called the 'waggle dance'. It's not actually a dance move at all, rather a clever way of communicating between themselves to tell their nest mates where to go to find the best source of food. If the queen bee

dies in a honeybee hive, the workers create a new queen bee. They do this by selecting a young larva and feeding it special food called 'royal jelly'. The larva will develop into a fertile queen.

The major significance of bees is they enable plants to reproduce and sustain their kinds. Availability of many plants and thus flowers sustain the existence of bees. It is something like quid pro quo. This is not isolated only to bees, but plants would give animals oxygen and animals would give it carbon dioxide. Animals would feast on plant when alive; plants would feast on animals when dead.

There is an inherent nature of give and take. Paul agreed with this notion when he said, **"remember that the person who sows few seeds will have a small crop; the one who sows many seeds will have a large crop. You should each give then as you have decided not with regret or out of sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly. And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause."**

It is a good thing to think positively and even visualize we have received what we want. But the greatest trick lies in giving out our talent whole heartedly for the benefit of others. When we want to grow rich or be happy in life, we should emulate the relationship between bees and plants and the relationship

between plants and animals. As we give out what we have gladly, God has promised to give us back more than we need ourselves.

In second Kings, we get an account of a widow whose husband's creditors threatened to sell her sons to pay for her husband's debt. The woman remembered her husband ministered to Elisha and he was God fearing. So the only person who would have helped her was Elisha.

She ran to him and told him the sad news. It is worth noting that Elisha did not tell her she had to travel to Gold coast and obtain some gold to sell and pay off her debts, neither did he require her to travel to Arabia and trade in petroleum to pay off her husband's debts. He asked a simple question. What do you have? Or what do you have at home? The oil she had at home was multiplied miraculously and she paid off her husband's debts and remained with more than enough to make her wealthy.

Another account similar to that is when Moses was doubting if he could really execute the task God had given him, he was asked, **'what are you holding?'** he was then ordered to throw the stick down and it turned to a snake, when he picked it by the tail, it reverted to a stick.

Jesus had compassion on a hungry crowd that was over five thousand persons since children and women were not counted.

He asked his disciples what they had to feed the crowd. They might have been shocked! There was no way they could feed that crowd. But Jesus used the few fish and loaves of bread they were willing to give and fed the whole crowd that at least twelve bags of leftover food was collected.

What if the disciples had said they had nothing, because of course the little food available was nothing! They would have been no miracle! If one looks keenly, all successful people took advantage of a skill, a talent and a resource within their reach and gave out themselves in giving or perfecting the skill, talent or resource without any guarantee of succeeding and that was their major breakthrough. God gave them more than they needed.

Though most would not attribute their success to God, let's remember the laws of nature were put in place by God and they are universal. They favour anybody if he obeys them. He sends rainfall and sunshine to the good and the evil. If the evil gave whole heartedly, he is bound to be blessed. But if the good hid his talent in the ground, even what he has will be taken away from him and he is bound to be poor.

We all have something to do or give that is within our reach. What we need to do is give out that talent, skill or resource wholeheartedly. We are advised that, **'do your sowing in the morning and the evening, too. You never know whether it will all grow well or whether one sowing will do better than**

**the other.'** These requires we give out all we can and surely we cannot miss, we will discover the talent that will grow, the skill we can perfect and the resource we can add value and the people who would like to benefit from it.

And as I said our giving out is always quid pro quo according to the rules of nature, we shall reap that happiness or wealth or whatever we are craving abundantly. The key is, never give up even when you see no progress in your efforts. Just imagine yourself with a bunch of dollars casting them in a swift flowing river and hoping you will find them some day. Like you have visited a beach somewhere and you find the dollars you had thrown away. That is how never relenting should look like.

## What it means to trust God to provide, protect and defend you, keeping you safe from all hidden dangers and all deadly diseases

**"You can get horses ready for battle, but it's the Lord who gives victory"**. In a nutshell, we have looked at how ants are hard working, how tiny and weak termites can do great things, the power of our thoughts, how what termites egests is comparable with our thoughts, how to embrace all seasons and the power of giving. If we have resolved to be hard workers, to take advantage of our small efforts, mind our thoughts, embrace all season and give gladly, that is good. But that is just preparing the horse. Are we ready to act on God's principles?

In Nairobi you often see stickers on Matatus, which are public service vehicles that carry 14 or 28 persons depending on the size of the Matatu. One such banner fascinated me. It read, “If hard work pays, donkeys would be trillionaires”. Most assuredly, the writer of the banner was disputing the maxim hard work pays. He was of the opinion there is no need to work hard. He must have seen things going well for some people; they do not suffer the pain others suffer.

What the writer did not know is that, in this life we don’t live by our strength. If I invoke the Pareto principle, only 20% of our efforts results to 80% of our well being. Knowing this, the psalmist wrote, “it is useless to work so hard for a living, getting up early and going to bed late. For the Lord provides for those he loves, while they are asleep”.

Setting a time to renew our mind and pray to our creator, handing our battles over to him is what constitutes the 20%. All other efforts on our own amounts to 80% of our time and only contributes to 20% of our well being. Therefore if you see people enjoying life without hard work, they or their parents or their grandparents spent a substantial amount of their time on their knees. God says he blesses the righteous up to thousands of generations. Sometimes the one on knees may not partake of what he sought, but because of him, God gives it to his children and grandchildren.

Additionally, hard workers do not tire and they don't expect instant results, they know every effort matters. It is like boiling an ice cube. The temperature keeps increasing from 0 degrees Celsius to 99 degrees Celsius. Those who have the mentality that hard work does not pay would have stopped boiling the ice cube between temperatures 0-99 degrees Celsius. They would have thrown their hands in air despairingly that the cube would not boil.

But that additional 1 degree is as important as the other degrees from 0-99, but what tilted the scales? The last 1 degree Celsius, to enable the cube boil at 100 degrees Celsius. That is why Isaiah fittingly said, **"even those who are young will get weak, young people will fall from exhaustion, but those who trust the LORD for help will find their strength renewed. They will rise on wings like eagles; they will run and not get weary; they will walk and not grow weak".**

Notice the Bible suitably used the analogy of young people. They are the youth that have radiant health and vibrant energy than any other human being whatever the age! But these youthful or young people if they fail to rely on God, they will get weak, they will faint with exhaustion. Now when they see an old man who trusts in God wading through life effortlessly, they will mutter dejectedly, "If hard work pays, donkeys would be trillionaires".

During trying times we need to get hold of our thoughts. We have seen how our thoughts are powerful when we looked at what termite egests. They produce termites and mushrooms fit to be eaten and poisonous products. In addition we need to guard against toxic persons that will poison our mind. Job's three friends in the Bible tried to make Job feel guilty. Being guilty would have sapped his energy and he would not have had the clean conscience to approach God in prayer. His wife told him to curse God and die. She knew once he refuted God, his strength to live would evaporate. But Job knew he had to embrace all seasons, he had to trust God unconditionally.

Sometimes our prayers are not answered immediately since Satan may be opposing and delaying angels sent to minister to us. Daniel had fasted for 21 days hoping God would help him. On the 24th day an angel appeared to him and told him, the angel prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed him for 21 days. He was rescued by Michael, one of the chief angels.

King David was such a person who experienced delays in his life. After being anointed to be the king, he went back to herd sheep. He was called to play the harp to King Saul who had a disturbing spirit. He was later to flee from Saul who wanted to kill him and live as a fugitive. But he did not give up on the promise. At God's own time, he became King. God teaches us through nature and seasons; this enables us to know that learning and acting on God's principles, is accompanied by a

reward: God will provide, protect and defend us, keeping us safe from all hidden dangers and all deadly diseases.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

9. Proverbs 6:6-11
30. Proverbs 22:6
35. Deuteronomy 6:6-11
41. Psalms 1:1-3
42. 1 Samuel 21:1-15; 23:1-29; 25:2-44; 2 Samuel 12:16-20; 15:1-37
46. 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7
48-49. 2 Kings 4:1-7
50. Exodus 4: 2-4
51. Matthew 15:34-37; Mark 6:38-43; john 6:9-13
54. Ecclesiastes 11:6
56. Proverbs 21:31
58. Psalms 127:2
59. Psalms 78:4
61. Isaiah 40:30, 31
63. Job 2:9, 10
64. Daniel 10:13
65 1 Samuel 16:1-2 Samuel 18:33

## Chapter 2
## Have the desire to learn God's principles

***The Lord says, 'I will teach you the way you should go; I will instruct you and advise you'. - Psalms 32:8***

My paternal grandmother was illiterate. She did not know how to read or write. She knew no other language apart from Luhya. However, she had the desire to learn God's principles. When the Catholic missionaries were spreading the gospel in her area, she and grandfather quickly accepted the religion. She supported grandfather who had an opportunity to read and write. As grandfather pursued formal education, she took care of her children. She did subsistence farming to support the kids. She had a small scale farm where the British government had helped her establish a tea plantation. She dutifully picked the tea leaves very early in the morning, every day and dispatched to the local tea collection centre.

It was a daunting task but she was a powerhouse of energy, depicting only what God can do using frail human beings. She was quick to embrace anything new that she was sure was beneficial to her. She discarded local traditions and as far as I remember she only glorified Christianity. She was a receptor of

good news and she had committed most Bible verses read to her by her husband to memory. She knew what verses to recite to married couples, the youth and children. She knew what verses she could use for general advice and verses she could use in praise and worship. She recited them with clarity that one would have thought she knew how to read and write.

Her husband was instrumental in translating the English Bible into the local vernacular. She became so interested in his work that she was a pillar that held her husband. Her farm radiated her character. She had bananas, guavas, papaya, avocadoes, pears, loquats and citrus fruits. She also planted exotic vegetables like kale, spinach and turnip. The local vegetables in her farm were spider plant, cowpeas, Jewish Malloy, amaranth and black night shed. She was ever smiling and jovial. She had a hearty laughter that reverberated throughout the house.

I became interested in her and wanted to know more about our traditions and how she was christened but unfortunately old age had overtaken her and she could not remember anything. She only kept telling me, my grandson read and see, respect your father and mother that it may go well with you, and you may live a long time on earth. I heard that she lost a great part of her memory when her husband passed on. She instructed her elder son to take care of her younger son and prepared herself to meet the Lord. She gave freely all the households effects to neighbours and retained the bed only. But no one knows the

day or hour; she was to live for a very long time after her husband's demise!

Perhaps the idea of ever thinking about her termination is what caused the rift between her and my dad. I was told, after ten years had elapsed without anything happening, her daughter who was married to a politician restored the furniture and bought a milking cow to keep her busy. Three years later she thought she was ready and gave out the furniture. 19 years had elapsed since grandfather went to be with the Lord and I had been born. Father might have had bitterness with his mother for being distant to him and to his brother and his children for mistreating him. But having no mentor or father figure he did not recover from that bile that destroyed him.

Meanwhile grandmother realised she was not going anywhere soon and devoted the time she denied her son to me. Whenever bananas, papaya, guava, avocadoes, loquats and citrus fruits were ready for harvesting, she would harvest them and bring them at our home. Father was usually not at home and the few occasions he was at home, he never slept at home, when her mother was there. These made grandmother to emphasize to me that I should love and respect my father and mother. She lived an austere life and using all the money her daughters would send her for travelling and helping her neighbours. She never gave out the furniture my dad had purchased for her.

My grandmother taught me a valuable lesson, God wants to achieve great dreams in us, and we should have that desire to learn his principles. We should not come up with our own understanding of what God wants of us. We should not be in a hurry to reach conclusions since God's vision to us unfolds slowly as much as He perceives we can absorb it. Jesus knew we all had that weakness. He said, **"I have much more to tell you, but now it would be too much for you to bear"**. My grandmother was in a hurry to go to heaven when God had plans she should take care of my father. She lived for 39 years extending well in 100 plus years after her husband was no more. God blessed her with good health, in fact she was weeding her vegetables while sitting down, then she left the farm to have a little nap and that was when the hour arrived.

Suppose she had not been overly concerned about passing away and devoted her energy to the family, what great things could she have achieved? We understand that God does not judge as we human beings do, for we look at the outward appearance but He looks at the heart. Even in her weakness and poor judgement, God made her discover her hidden potential as He was quick to reward her for her desire to learn His principles. His eyes are searching all over the whole world to reward those whose hearts are loyal to him. For her faithfulness, grandmother was rewarded with a healthy long life, she never buried any of her child, she always had her basic needs met, she planted the seed of faith in me.

There is an account about one of my cousins that reminds me we must desire to learn God's principles to avoid pitfalls. He joined one of the apocalypse cults. This was a religion that integrated African traditions with Christianity. Its priests were possessed with some spirit and they did miracles that amazed the masses. However, they were polygamous and they liberally had sex with women in their church after hypnotising them. The sexual activities made most parents to dissuade their children from joining the church and avoiding its members like the plague.

But my cousin despite being aware of the dangers of the church joined. One of the priests committed adultery with my cousin's wife. He was devastated. But the other priests managed to prevail against him that there was no need to grief since the world would end the following week and he would ascend to heaven and he would be given a beautiful angel as his wife. The idea pleased my cousin. He devoted his time to the ministry and when the D-day come, their main priest told them they had to travel to Lake Victoria to meet the 'lord'.

When they reached Lake Victoria, my cousin and three other dissidents were told to board a boat on the shores of the lake and were to row till they found an island in the middle of the lake. They would find all the religion's priest there as they 'would fly, since they had the powers'. My cousin and his mates rowed and rowed but they never reached any island, as of course there was none in the direction they had been directed.

Meanwhile the priests returned to the village hoping that the storm that had been predicted to hit Lake Victoria by the meteorological station would capsize the boat and they would have gotten rid of the four protestors. They then had all the freedom to do what they wanted with their wives. My cousin and his mates were rescued by Ugandan fishermen, who treated them of exhaustion. They later lived with the fishermen for fifteen years before retracing their steps back to the village. The apocalypse priests were lynched by villagers immediately my cousin and three other men went missing, lacking leadership, the church died out.

The desire to learn about God's principles can be acquired by the objective examination of the Bible and the environment that surround us; not following every wind of teachings by men. '**All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults and giving instruction for right living that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed'**

We have a great record of those who were rewarded by God since they desired to learn his principles and please Him. Abraham took a risk by leaving familiar ambience to go out to a country which God had promised him. We have kings that restored true worship like Hezekiah by destroying altars built for false gods. God rewarded them by giving them peace and

destroying their enemies. We have persons who believed in Jesus and they were rewarded as their sins were forgiven and their sicknesses healed.

Therefore, one should have the desire to learn God's principles. One should believe as he pleases God, there is a reward for him. For whoever comes to God, must have faith that God exists and rewards those who seek Him.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

7. Proverbs 4:18; John 16:12
13. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17
14 Genesis 12:1; 2 Kings 18:22; Matthew 4:24; 9:36; 12:15; 14:14; 19:2
15 Hebrews 11:6

## Chapter 3
## God is keen to teach you his principles and reward you

***"He trains me for battle, so that I can use the strongest bow" Psalm 18:34.***

As a toddler I admired my paternal grandmother. My grandmother was a staunch catholic. The first thing in the morning for her was to sing several praise songs then recite the rosary or other catholic tenets I was not keen on. The last thing before she slept was to sing praise and worship songs and recite the rosary. I liked her commitment, and she loved me, I was her favourite grandson. Her prayer was, I should grow to be God fearing.

She put in place the first cornerstone in preparing me to love God. I loved God as a toddler and in my mind I imagined Him to be an invisible tall man whose legs touched the earth and his head was in the heavens. Even so I never liked church. My mother dutifully attended church every Sunday but she could not force me to attend since I protested father never went to church. But occasionally I willingly went to church till one Sunday.

Our classes in school were made of earthen floor. We smeared cow dung every Friday evening and this was enough to arrest dust for the whole week. It was the norm that girls carried water and boys carried cow dung. The boys swept the class clean then girls applied cow dung. Now it happened that this particular Friday I was the only one who carried cow dung and none of the other boys did so. The girls reported to the class teacher that there was no cow dung. As a punishment, the class teacher ordered all boys to carry cow dung and water to smear the floor the following day which was a Saturday. That Saturday I was to attend classes in Catholic Church which were compulsory for one to meet the requirements before taking sacraments. So I missed the class.

On Sunday when I went to the Sunday school, the Sunday school teacher asked me why I was absent the previous day. I told him. He punished me by deciding I would not to attend that Sunday school but slash grass behind the Sunday school and wash latrines. After slashing the grass, a nun gave me a bucket and I fetched water from a tap in readiness to wash the latrines. I was shocked when I opened the latrine door, my eyes dilated in disbelief. Hundreds of big coloured flies buzzed past me as if angry that I had disturbed their peace.

On the floor of the latrine were several mounds of human refuse with millions of worms or larvae wriggling in them. The latrines must have stayed dirty since the previous Sunday. I just dropped the bucked, clutched my nose with my hand and ran

home as fast as my thin legs could carry me. That was the last time I attended the Catholic Church.

Though I had asphyxiated the seed my granny had planted, it remained dormant ready to grow when the conditions were favourable. When I was in upper primary school, Gideon's International gave every teacher in our school a complete Bible and every student a New Testament Bible with Proverbs and Psalms. Since I was an avid reader, I read proverbs, psalms, the gospels and epistles in that order. Thereby, the curiosity of the proverbial cat drove me to attend a crusade by one B'jonah Heimstead and present was my all time favourite gospel singer Mary Atieno. Mary Atieno is blind and looks like she had polio or some form of paralysis. In this crusade, Heimstead healed the sick, made the crippled walk, made the blind see, and made the deaf hear, but I wondered why Miss Atieno was not healed.

In a quick rejoinder after Heimstead had left our town, Muslims organised a crusade to counter the wave of the preacher since Muslim religion was taking root in that part of the town. The crusade was structured in a manner that people were to ask questions and a child of about six years answered them. The child was a sensation, knowing everything in Quran and the Bible. People whispered that he was possessed with a jinni. I got to understand Muslims revere the Old Testament and they accept it as part of their teachings.

They disregard the epistles of Paul and selectively believed the gospels. One person had asked why they selectively trusted the Gospels. The six year kid had pointed at the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, where they say **'he is so worthy that I cannot carry his shoes', 'I am not worthy to stoop down and untie his shoe laces'** and **'I am not worthy to unloose his shoe laces'** respectively. Then they posed a question; can you believe witnesses saying two different things? The crowd grovelled; but some left the gathering muttering that if you sought the truth diligently you would get lost.

I subsequently joined high school. I never joined the young Christian association or the Christian union which were the common religious groupings in high school. This was because most of them were not living according to the Bible knowledge I had gleaned at the time. In high school it was possible to sleep hungry or remain unsatisfied. Bullies ensured they ate to their fill depraving others. Another way, other than bullying, one would ensure he ate to satisfaction was to be a school prefect.

Usually we had table service and we were twelve per table. The table mates rejoiced when at least three others were absent. This translated to more food or bigger share of bread. One time at least four of our table mates were missing, then one prefect wanted to fix a boy on our table that had been denied food by bullies on his table and they had already gobbled it down their throats. This prefect, Elegwa by name, became annoyed with

me for no reason since I had already served food to my table mates, and he took my food and gave to the boy. I slept hungry.

I was one of those students taken advantage of by bullies; I grew so thin that one of my dormitory mate who was very vocal taunted me in front of other roommates that I had AIDS. To add salt to the injury, another dormitory mate snapped maliciously that he saw me attending local dances during school holidays. When I said I had never attended such dances he insisted he saw me. At least other four dormitory mates agreed with him and believed he was saying the truth. They concluded that was the best reason to explain my thinness. Local dances were sex orgies organized by youths and any parent would not allow his kid to attend.

My classmates started to ostracize me and when we closed school for one August holiday, I was so depressed that I went to a popular joint near our school, known as Fort Jesus. It was a slum dwelling with very complicated inlets and outlets. It sold local brew known as Chang'aa and Busaa. Chang'aa was over 70% alcohol and Busaa must have been 15%. Both brews were illegal. But business thrived in Fort Jesus since law enforcers got lost in the maze of the slum and thus they were never able to apprehend the brewers or the drinkers. Sometimes they could be chased away as thieves and anybody who loved his life would avoid this unnecessary mob justice.

I took a generous amount of Busaa and a little Chang'aa to forget my problems. Then I headed home. I wanted to go straight to bed when I reached home. At home my dad was going through his own challenges and he was a drunkard by then. Mother was a depressed woman as she shouldered all the burden of taking care of her four kids. I had my hut several metres from my parents' house and nobody cared whether I was in or out.

Unfortunately it started drizzling and I was forced to take shelter on a nearby veranda. While under its shelter, I saw two kids peeping at me through the window. I smiled and winked at them. They slowly became free with me and they opened the door and came on the veranda. I played with them a popular game known as 'banda'. Then I felt nauseated and vomited. My vomit reeked of Busaa and Changaa.

The kids were shocked or was it fear? They rushed into the house called their mother and informed her that a stranger was outside and had vomited on their veranda. The mother rushed outside like a wounded lion, a broom in one hand. She reprimanded me for being a drunkard and ordered that I leave their veranda immediately. I was lucky she never told me to mop the mess.

I obeyed and rushed into the showery rain. The rain might have made me sober, for I realised I had not eaten anything since morning. I felt pangs of hunger gnawing at my stomach. I ran

inside a nearby cafe to grab some 'Mandazi', and a cup of tea. I just asked for two Mandazi but the proprietor brought five. I thanked the heavens for such wonderful and kind businessman. Unknown to me, I was just to eat two and leave the three.

It was a marketing ploy that you ask for a number of Mandazi, they bring more and if you can't control your greediness, you end up paying for the extra you ate. I gobbled the five Mandazi and tea down my throat. I had only five shillings to pay for tea and two Mandazi. As a punishment for eating more, I was given a task of peeling a sack of Irish potatoes to be used in making French fries. The peeling was tedious. You used a knife and if you were not keen you would end up with some severe cuts. Luckily for me, I was a bit drunk and the tea and Mandazi had given me the requisite energy. In addition I was prepared early for hard life and manual tasks. I peeled a sack of Irish potatoes, which was approximately one hundred and twenty kilograms, in a record one hour. The proprietor was so amazed that he packed for me ten Mandazi and five Samosas to carry home for free!

My paternal grandmother visited us often and she would say I was the reason she visited us. The main reason was, she actually visited her last born son but he was not always at home and I became a substitute to his son. One day while in high school, she came to visit and could not find me since I was a boarder. She expressed her desire to see me to no avail. A

week later, I was fetched from school to attend her demise and send off.

I cried my eyes out. Guilt and concern swirled around me; I wished we had met before she passed away. I lifted my tear-streaked face wiped the tears with the back of my hand and remembered her dedication as a staunch Catholic. She woke up with prayer and thanksgiving. She never slept without singing praise and praying. She prayed before eating any meal. Whenever she attended a party, wedding or just visited a relative and nice food was served, she parked a generous portion for me. She always carried a food box with her. It was the first time I realised I had lost a treasure. I was disturbed beyond bearing.

Though my father used to drink and loved convivial parties where drinks flowed freely, my grandmother's death aggravated the situation. He became an alcoholic. I was not close to him, so I never knew his side of the story but from my opinion, he realised he had lost gold while he was chasing after worthless stones.

My grandmother was the only relative he had. Instead of investing in her, he had spent most of his coins entertaining strangers while my mother and grandmother suffered, craving his attention. He had no relatives (at least those who liked him), though he was known as a man of the people, his friends

started dispersing one by one once alcoholism took toll on him and he had lost his financial muscle.

He gave up the ghost at a critical time when I had just finished high school. It was difficult obtaining a job to help my mother as nepotism, tribalism and favouritism played a role even in manual jobs in my country. I approached my father's drinking buddies, they were rich or in the middle class bracket.

Most pretended they never knew me. I was perplexed since they were constantly celebrating Christmas parties at our home in those good days. And they usually gave me and my sisters' cents to buy some sweets and biscuits. Few that showed concern told me I should be thinking of going to university and not looking for manual jobs as I had passed my exams in high school well.

I knew I was being chased away like a dog for the very reason I was seeking a job was I could not fund my university education and no well wisher was available. My relatives kept off and few that remained intended to grab the little property father had left us. I was left wondering why the world was cruel to some people and why fate was so partial, so selective and biased. I decided I would not approach the people I knew but deal with mere strangers. I prayed to God to have favour on me, and direct me to someone who would help me.

I called on one mechanic for apprenticeship and later, employment. He requested to see my primary and high school papers. I gave him. He whistled surprisingly, stashed the papers back into the khaki envelope and gave them back to me. He told me to follow him, he lead me under a tree and we sat on metal chairs facing each other.

He interrogated me then finally advised me to go back home and only think of going to college. He advised me I should not worry how that would happen, and where the cash would come from. I only needed to tell God in prayer and concentrate in putting our home in order, encouraging my mother who may then be so depressed and leave the rest to God. He went ahead and told me mostly he had hired school dropouts and he would not have liked me to be ruined by the bad boys or waste my years in the garage while I could be pursuing a career.

He ordered a take away lunch which consisted of a bottle of soda and white rice with fried meat. I ate ravenously and thankfully as my host gave me a lot of advice about life. He was the first person who had talked to me heartily and empathically that I decided to follow his advice. I nodded and muttered my profuse thanks to him, left him and promised to heed his advice.

I returned home to re-organize everything and if I had not done that immediately, my mother would have followed father due to depression. She relaxed a bit though she had already contracted asthma due to shallow breathing, anxiety and worry.

But it was justified since poverty ruled in our household. It bound us like a tight iron band. However, it was during this time that we reasoned what we should do. Then it dawned on us since father had been a teacher, there must have been funds stashed somewhere with the public trustee to educate us.

We visited the offices and sure enough there was something substantial to enable me to enrol in a College but not much to take me through university. And in any case I had missed my chance and it had already been offered to someone else. I joined Strathmore College and pursued accounting course. I was an evening student since I could not afford the fulltime package.

I finished the course successfully and worked thereafter as an intern in one of the auditing firm in Nairobi. A close look at my life showed I had a victim mentality and so I was always a victim. My relatives never loved my father, especially sons of his brother for they did not want him to inherit any part of his ancestral land. I can comfortably say then I had no relative from the paternal side.

The hatred they showed my father and mother is the one they meted against me. The relatives from maternal side were loving and warm only there existed a language barrier between us, my maternal grandmother and grandfather did not speak our national language that is, Kiswahili and English.

They only spoke Nandi. Since mother had not been keen to teach us Nandi I only knew Luhya by courtesy of my paternal grandmother. Worse still dad had purchased land far away from his ancestral home and we were surrounded by a certain Luhya sub-tribe that considered us as alien residents limiting our mingling and integration with them. With that background, I always felt hated; therefore, my internship was a disaster.

My supervisor looked at my credentials and was bothered that I could replace him. He therefore gave me misleading advice and I fumbled at my work and he was happy to bring this to the attention of the boss. He particularly gave me jobs that were sensitive as the clients were the major customers of my boss. They were the customers that brought the largest revenue.

I vividly remember the supervisor giving me ink stained A4 papers with pre-printed columns and rows. I was not perturbed by the stains for I thought what I would be doing was rough work and he did not want to waste stationery. I could transfer the work to clean sheets of paper once he had reviewed it. I was to give each column headings which were; output tax, input tax and refund. From the clients records I was to fill in the figures of various supplies, the output tax, input tax and amount payable or refundable. I was also to distinguish the supplies that were zero rated and those that were exempt. I was to get the total of all output tax and all input tax. The difference between the two would have been the value added tax payable or refundable.

The client was a manufacturing company and the net tax was refundable. I took the forms to my supervisor after I had done as instructed. He refused to look at the forms and told me to take them to the boss. That was the time hell broke loose. When the boss saw the ink stains on the papers, he erupted like a volcano, looked at me chillingly and immediately called my supervisor. I guessed something earth shuddering was about to happen.

He informed me in front of the supervisor, that the supervisor had told him I had not done anything right ever since I joined the firm. My mouth went agape. My body tensed with anger, fear and worry. Dangling the forms I had filled angrily in my face he told me the client I was messing with was so important to him that he could not lose him because of my carelessness. He gave the forms to my supervisor and told him to go and type, then print the forms. I could see my supervisor's eye twinkle with delight, stifling laughter and all his body radiating happiness. A broad wide smile played on his lips as he took the forms. Later the supervisor returned to the boss with dully filled and printed forms. The boss called me, a wide grin spread over his face and happily, he told me he wanted clean work as the printed forms. Then he dismissed me and they started to discuss with my supervisor how to discharge me.

The following day, my supervisor assigned me audit work. I was to audit a security firm in the industrial area in Nairobi. The supervisor gave me the necessary introductory documents and

the direction to the firm. He advised me to audit five years back. He promised to join me later. I asked him why I should audit five years back when audit was only confined to one year. In addition I needed the permanent and the current audit files of the client to familiarize myself with the work. He told me they had never audited the client so the files were not available. The previous auditor was uncooperative and hence the only way to approach the work was to audit five years back.

Grudgingly I took the task. The first thing I asked for was the memorandum of association and the articles of association of the firm. They told me our audit firm had copies nevertheless they gave me copies. I told them to avail five years documents, the proprietor of the firm was short tempered man, but I had gained favour with God that he posed no trouble to me. He asked angrily why I would audit five years work when the audit was done by our firm and they were satisfied. I told him my supervisor instructed me to do so, I knew it was not the right thing but I was under instructions.

He ordered all document to be availed to me. Their documents were organized and I was able to complete the audit in three days. However for the inconvenience I had caused him, he had reported me to the boss. My supervisor never joined me for the audit as he had promised. When I presented the draft report with the permanent audit and the current audit file I had constructed to the boss, I was met with a sad stare.

He perused the work hoping pin me down but liked it instead. He told me he had decided to send me away since I had really antagonized his main clients but given that I had drafted a good report backed up with evidence, instead of giving me a dismissal letter, he would give me a recommendation letter. I agreed since I realised the bad blood that had developed between me and my supervisor was not healthy for me to work in that audit firm.

I had fallen in love with audit work so I joined another audit firm in Eldoret. The firm was organised and had permanent and current audit files filed chronologically. In addition the files were colour coded. If the boss for instance told you to avail a red file of a certain client, you automatically knew it was the permanent audit file.

The boss had worked with Lybrand and Coopers and still had many documents of the firm and I was informed he had inherited most clients of the firm when Lybrand and coopers closed business in the town and decided to concentrate on big businesses and the governments in Nairobi. Lybrand and coopers was the present day Pricewatercooperhouse. It was with this firm that I first learned to prepare an extended trial balance in practise, arrange evidence in current audit file according to a standard code, and the importance of standards since everything was standardized and we always followed an audit programme. I learned about peer review and checklists and my career in accountancy took giant leaps because of this firm.

The boss was overall and he did not group us into supervisors and subordinates rather we were peers and for that reason there existed no jealousy among us. Another quality of my boss was time management, he required us to start work at 8.00 am and we were to leave punctuality at 5 pm. He often told us working late into the evening was a sign of inefficiency. He added we needed time to recharge and develop ourselves, what we needed was to utilize the available time efficiently, never wasting it and there would be no need to work late.

With time as I matured, I realised God was keen to teach me his principles and reward me. I appreciated that God may not heal some of our sicknesses since he can still accomplish great things in our weaknesses. That is why my favourite singer gospel Mary Atieno was not healed and in her frailty, I can attest she has accomplished more that I can do in my radiant health. I came to appreciate the Bible as a true account of real happenings and its words having God's power to change anyone.

One such person like Mary Atieno was Paul. It is reported in the Bible Paul performed great miracles and healed people. In fact even the handkerchiefs and aprons that he had touched were taken to the sick, and when they came in contact them, they got healed. Yet Paul was not healed of his sickness. We read, **'... because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore,**

**in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me'**- NIV.

In a crusade I had attended in my childhood days, Muslims disputed the authenticity of the Gospels. They used the accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke on Jesus' shoes to poke holes on the genuineness of the Gospels. They contented the three were false witnesses reporting inconsistently; one cannot stop low to untie Jesus' shoe laces; the other he cannot carry the shoes and last cannot touch his shoes. But this served to make me appreciate God uses mere common man to accomplish his plans. No human being can report something using the same words unless they are reading a script. In addition, you untie the laces first before you carry the shoes; hence the message was the same. And since no one has edited the verses, it gives the Bible more credibility.

When I reflect on the times I slept hungry in high school, I see it as God's doing. He prepared me in advance. Circumstances beyond my control have forced me to sleep hungry during college and shortly after, I am glad I did it so effortlessly due to previous training. I remember when I was accused falsely in High School for having AIDS and a supervisor at an audit firm maligning me, and I note that it taught me a vital lesson of never believing everything people say and accusing myself. People may belittle and discourage you, but realise it's their opinion, not God's! You are valuable; you were created for a great purpose.

It is God who has your reward; He is the one who has your destiny.

Since He holds your destiny, God is eager to teach you His principles and reward you for applying them in your life. David cried, **'teach me, Lord, what you want me to do, and I will obey you faithfully; teach me to serve you with complete devotion'**. God quickly answered his prayer and showed him how to use the sling. He gave him courage to kill wild animals including the lion that could attack the sheep. When bored at herding, God gave him skill to play the harp. David was getting trained to use the strongest bow!

An opportunity came when he put his skills to use by using the sling to kill Goliath who had challenged the Israelites for one to one battle. While every Israelite melted with fear, David, a novice in battle matters, was brave enough to face Goliath. God had taught him, He had answered his prayer.

When King Saul had an evil spirit that disturbed him, David used his skill to pacify him. David had been trained to patiently wait on his father's sheep. The training helped him to patiently handle King Saul. He tried to spear David several times but David never took revenge on him. David was able, and he had been anointed to be a king. He could easily topple Saul and take Kingship, but he waited patiently for God himself to install him. He had several opportunities of killing King Saul but he respected him as God chosen King for that time.

God knew one of David's sons would take the kingdom away from him by force. He trained David to deal with the situation before hand as he ran away from Saul. When Absalom made a coup on his father David, David easily passed through the coup period as he had been a fugitive before. Like King David, God is excited about training anybody who is willingly so that he may handle the reward He will give him well and derive the maximum satisfaction from it.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

8, 46. Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:7; Luke 3:16
45. 2 Corinthians 12:7; Acts 14:9; 19:12
48. Psalms 86:11; Psalm 18:34
49. 1 Samuel 17:49, 50; 1 Samuel 16:14-23; 18:11; 19:10; 24:1-17; 26:8-21
51. 2 Samuel 15:1-18:33

## Chapter 4
## Injudicious viewpoint and your antagonists will snatch your reward

***As soon as Jezebel received the message, she said to Ahab, "Naboth is dead. Now go and take possession of the vineyard which he refused to sell to you". – 1 Kings 21:15.***

Our new neighbours believed in witchcraft, they were superstitious and were a gossiping lot. Notably it was an ill omen for an owl to hoot inside ones homestead. If it did, it meant someone in that homestead would die. Owls were domesticated by some folks. If someone wanted to eradicate another, he would pay the owl owner handsomely, who would at night dispatch an owl or several to howl inside the compound of the selected victim. It is not proven if it worked but everyone believed it worked. However, there was a way to counter the

effect of a hooting owl, all family members were to wake up and chase the owl/owls away and never to sleep for the rest of the night. The family member that slept died.

Leaving the house in the morning was also a weighty matter. It was expected the first person you should meet had to be someone of the opposite sex. If a man woke up and met another man the first thing in the morning, it was a bad sign. He would have to go back and stay indoors the whole day or immediately find a white hen and take it to the priest who would bless him before he ventured out to pursue his endeavours. Similarly, the same applied to women, a woman was not to meet another woman first thing in the morning. For this reason the mother would rise up early, she would then go to the boys' hut and wake them up. The boys will go to the girls' hut and wake them up. The woman would prepare breakfast and take it to her husband. In that way the family ensured that the first person they met was of the opposite sex.

Meeting other persons in the morning was not only isolated to people, it included animals. A black animal especially a cat was not to cross someone's path early in the morning. It meant a bad omen. One had to take two hens to the priest to appease the gods; a white and a black hen. The black hen was to be slaughtered and blood poured on the shrine. The priest was to be given some money to undo the bad omen and bless the one faced with the premonition. Black animals could be met freely at

any other time. At night it was only the owner and his family who were supposed to see or meet the black animal.

One was not to stumble when walking. If he did, he had to consult the priest immediately. Armed with a few shillings to pay for the services, the priest would tell him the meaning. Normally one was not to continue with the journey if he stumbled since the gods could be warning him of imminent danger.

Neighbours' animals like cats, dogs, hens, pigeons, snakes and ducks were not supposed to enter your house. If they did, it was believed they had come or sent to 'plant' charms and amulets. The charms and amulets would make a member or members of the family sick, retard their development or bring them any other bad luck. It was believed the animals were not real animals but a jinni taking the shape of an animal.

When one was taking any drink, even just water, he had to pour down some before drinking. By so doing the god of drinks who was believed to live underground would cleanse the drink and remove toxins from it, making it safe to drink.

One was to be careful of the tree he planted outside his compound. It was understood some trees where hideouts for the devil. Some trees like the umbrella tree, it was alleged they killed the owner once the roots grew to touch the house. Some trees were supposed to be powerful to undo the works of witchcraft or deter witches while others aided them. The folks

who claimed they did not involve themselves in witchcraft avoided the trees whose scented flowers opened at night. It was assumed the fragrance attracted evil spirits including snakes.

It was habitual for residents not to build permanent houses in view of the fact that they believed the spirit of the dead still roamed the house after his/her demise. Therefore if one's spouse died, the remaining one had to pull down the house of the deceased before re-marrying to prevent his/her spirit roaming in the house which would kill the new spouse.

If ones hands itched and he felt like scratching them, especially the palms, it meant one was going to get hold of or find some money. A similar thing happened when one's eyes twitched, it meant he was going to see something good or get money.

If one met ants relocating, there was going to be a feast in his homestead. Important visitors or relatives would be visiting him. Ants relocated for a number of reasons, they included; their nest had been attacked by pests, fungi or it was leaking. They normally carry their eggs which look like rice, this is what was associated with a feast since rice was usually cooked in feasts only, and otherwise people ate Ugali.

People were too cautious of how they stored their clothes, shoes and ornaments. Bodily products like the hair and nails were disposed of carefully in a pit latrine. It was believed those who kept the Cobra snake collected dressing articles which

included clothes, shoes, watches, socks, innerwear, necklace, bracelets and bodily products like hair. The items were put in the pot where the snake laid its eggs. When it was protecting the eggs till they hatched, it was whispered that the owner could control anybody whose articles were in the pot during this period. For instance, if he wanted to copulate with a neighbour's wife, he would just intone the words over the pot then go and seek the woman.

The woman would be so confused that she would submit to the man's demands without knowing. Similarly if he wanted to steal a neighbour's possession, he would speak the words to the pot, and then go carry the act. He would do it seamlessly and he would never be caught. He could also make one sick or dead by just talking to the pot provided an article of the person's clothing was in the pot. The snake was a god of wealth and a protector. It protected the owner from evil eyes and spirits. It also made the owner to grow wealthy.

It was prohibited for one to clean and sweep the house at night. It was alleged witches would get hold of a person's bodily products that had not been disposed of properly and use them to bewitch the person. Similarly, it was a taboo to mention the devil and other evil animals like the snake by name at night. The snake could just be called a rope at night. Mentioning the real name made the devil or the evil animal to appear.

Jefu who had sold land to my father became covetous and wanted to grab it back. He was able bodied man in his late sixties; he was healthy and was as fit as a fiddle that one would have thought he was in his mid twenties. He was so wealthy by the village standards; he had over 500 cows and over 300 goats. He raised sugarcane on a 16 acre piece of land. Each acre produced about 80 tonnes of sugarcane. Nzioa sugar factory paid about 1,200 shillings per tonne. After every 18 months, Jefu received about 1.5 million shillings. That was a lot of money in early 80s. At that time, the Kenyan shilling was so strong that 1 USD was equal to 20 Kenyan shillings.

But Jefu lived large. He never cared about educating his children who were about 16 in number, nor did he think of building a permanent house. But for the permanent house, that was understandable since the society did not find the idea cool. Once he got the sugarcane cheque, he disappeared to the nearest town and spent the amount on whores and young girls qualifying to be his grandchildren. He changed women and girls like clothes till the last cent was spent.

His children, the second wife and anybody who cared to listen to gossip revered him. It was rumoured that his first wife had complained in front of the family about his wayward ways. He was so infuriated someone had challenged his authority that he bawled he would kill her. The rumour continued that Jefu went to the pots where his several cobras were guarding their eggs

waiting for them to hatch. He chattered to the pots that he wanted his first wife dead.

The next day while the first wife was feeding the snakes, being clumsy and absent minded, she was bit by a young cobra snake. She did not mind it. She just finished feeding them, retired to her bedroom and dropped dead on her bed. It was not until a day later that her daughter found her lifeless body. When Jefu was informed, who by then was staying with the second wife, he gathered all members of his family. When they had assembled, he happily told them no one struggles with him; he had told them he would kill his wife. She was dead, that was to act as a lesson to anybody who challenged him. From that day the whole family worshipped him, and neighbours who trusted the story afterwards.

My father who was teaching in Nandi Hills was summoned by Jefu one day. Jefu told him he wanted his land back and if he was a wise man he should vacate willingly or else... He capitalised on the tale that he had killed his wife to threaten my father that he had to vacate or breathe his last. Land tenure at that time had daunting challenges. Most persons had huge parcels of land but with no title deeds. After independence land had been subdivided and residents allocated land but most were illiterate, they did not follow up with lands board to get title deeds. Most residents involved themselves in witchcraft and believed their gods were enough to protect their land.

My father having no suitable relative to advice him, the brief encounter with Jefu was to change his life forever. He tried to seek help from his colleagues, but almost all were jealousy or envious of him that they never sympathized with him. He confided in a woman who sold vegetables regularly to him while he was at his duty station. This led to an affair, whose product was a son. The woman no longer became his shelter from the storm but an outlet for his pay cheque. The stint seared my mother's mind that she would not have been father's advisor, father was on his own. He sought transfer, so that he would try to rebuild his crumbling family. His superiors however, frustrated his relocation as he was a valuable and committed employee. He turned to what he called, 'my bottle of rum' for succour.

When he became a drunkard, his superiors finally consented to his transfer. Meanwhile, Jefu unable to evict my mother, who had sought the services of the Village Elder and the area Chief, hired an advocate to file a complaint with the law courts to get orders to eject us. The lawyer advised him, he had first to seek the title deed of 'his' land before he could evict anybody. He paid the lawyer dearly from sugarcane proceeds and after two years he had acquired the title deed and was then the legal owner of the land he had 'owned' for nearly a half a century. He burned his copy of purchase agreement with my father and claimed he was a squatter who was encumbering his land. He filed the eviction case officially.

Court notice to attend a session was a great shock to my dad. He went to drink with his buddies who advised him to seek a powerful conjuror who would 'bind' the land from being taken by Jefu. He would also bewitch the magistrate so that he determines the case in his favour. The counsel looked heaven sent to my father; it was like a gift on a golden platter. He took it hook and sinker. His buddies realising he was naive, encouraged him to relax. They took it upon themselves to find the juggler. Meanwhile they paid a whore to message father's ego and relieve his anxiety. The woman realising he could just get a regular cheque since in the village it was never easy to get clients, she became father's steadfast woman, that his inner circle started referring to her as the second wife.

Father's drinking buddies, handpicked a man from the streets and informed him to pretend to be a great magician. The man was brought to our house at midnight. I wasn't a sleep. His attire was so intimidating that you would actually believe he was a conjuror. He spoke some alien language, he took father outside, and they buried some herbs. He did some rituals and everyone was convinced he was a great magician. Early in the morning the entourage returned to the house. The magician gave father some ashes which all members of the family were to lick for two days. Then after being paid heftily he left. Rumour had it that he returned to father's drinking buddies and they shared the spoil.

At about the same period, my paternal grandmother was trying to seek audience with father to return and inherit his share of

her husband's land. But father had been avoiding her. He in fact left home whenever grandmother visited us and stayed with his whore till grandmother returned to her home. From her talk with me I perceived my grandmother had given up on her son. She told me I was the reason she visited her son's home. She said she wanted me to 'read and see'; she did not want me to learn just for the sake of learning but to read and see. She always quoted for me the verses, **"Children, it is your Christian duty to obey your parents, for this is the right thing to do. 'Respect your father and mother', is the first commandment that has a promise added: 'so that all may go well with you, and you may live a long time in the land.' "** Though later I saw these verses as a veiled complain against my father.

My grandmother had other four children; three daughters and a son. The son was the eldest. She had lived happily with her husband and raised the four children till they were adults. Her husband had decided since they were having no more children and there was shortage of priests in their Catholic Church, he would be a priest. He abandoned his family or rather bid them farewell and joined priesthood. At that time, the elder son had married and was having at least two toddlers and a teenager.

Unknown to my grandparents, grandmother was pregnant. My grandmother was not aware of it since she had already into menopause with a bonus of many years. Grandfather was not aware of it since he was cock sure grandmother would never conceive again! It was a shock when the revelation became

manifest. But since he was already a priest, there was no going back, grandmother single handedly brought up father. Grandfather died later when my father was five years old.

But you can imagine the shock his elder brother got! He thought he was the only heir, then boom! a rival was born! My father was mistreated by his elder brother who had taught his children to do the same. He grew up a bitter man not having a father figure and loving relatives. My grandmother was too engrossed in following her husband to know what was going on. As she gave all to the son of her old age, the son had grown to resent her. The son thought she was the origin of his melancholy. Father had no mentor. He had no idea he was going against the well established laws of nature, "... When your mother is old, show her your appreciation". By failing to show some gratitude to her mother he was ensnared in simple traps that ordinarily God would have delivered him from.

My father impregnated my mother when they met in college. My mother was forced to drop out and stayed with my paternal grandmother where she went through fire and brimstone. My father's brother and his children mistreated mother that immediately she had given birth; she implored him they should move out. His sister, a third born, was married deep in the western part where he sought asylum with his lady. He left mother with his sister and proceeded to complete college.

He used his first pay cheque to buy land from Jefu. His sisters were not helpful as the first one was married to a drunkard and had his measure of strictures to deal with. The second one had taken care of mother while he completed college, but she was barren, this weighed heavily on her that when her husband married another woman, she became permanently sick with a chronic diseases. The last sister was married to a politician who had secured jobs to three of his elder brother's children that he thought she sided with them that they were never close.

The day awaited by dad and Jefu with bated breath had arrived. Jefu had been using experts in law while dad had been using his drinking buddies without consulting anyone like mother or grandmother. Lawyers had advised Jefu to give a sop to Cerberus. They had therefore bribed the magistrate. The magistrate gave one line judgement that dad should vacate the land voluntarily. The magistrate thereafter sought transfer and went to another province.

Jefu was over the moon with the judgement! He showed everybody who cared the piece of paper that had been stamped by his lawyer. Jefu congregated his family and broke the good news to them. They adored him! Everybody knew my father would win the case since he was educated, a primary school teacher. Jefu was illiterate and never ever attended any school; he did not even know how to write his name! "I told you, my things, I am going to take possession of the vineyard!" he boasted to anybody who cared to listen referring to his snakes

as his things. He managed to sway a great multitude of neighbours to believe his snakes were magical.

Father came home drunk, literary soaked in the 'my bottle of rum' as he called alcohol. He told us that we had no home, his brother did not want him to share in the ancestral land and the piece he purchased had been repossessed. He gave mother a crumbled piece of paper. She just laughed. She was past caring; she was shouldering the burden of taking care of us alone. My father's whore, whom he called 'sweet Vicky' was gouging him every cent she could manage. She had even hanged a placard in the two roomed house dad had rented for her that states, 'money is the soap of the heart, it washes the heart clean'.

Mother read the paper then tearing it she said she was not going to leave that land of her own accord. She had to be forced. She had invested a lot in the land. She had just completed a permanent house, how was she to start from the scratch? She was debt laden, and at least the land cushioned her in terms of food, never! Over her dead body she resolved. Dad just swayed from side to side bewildered by her words and I could see he was admiring her courage.

I joined high school; Jefu was unable to evict us since the judgement was vague and un-enforceable. Worse still, the magistrate who gave the judgement was unavailable. He was forced to file another case, as advised by his lawyers, who were

not keen on helping him but saw him gullible to give them a source of income. While in my second year at high school, grandmother passed away. Vicky hatched a strategy to inherit some part of dad's land. Her sisters advised her she could only do so if we remained illiterate.

So she ensured dad was never sober, she would take all his money and to make sure our education should hit a snag. However, dad was only glad to remain in that stupor as the death of his mother might have made him guilty of something. But alcohol has its effects, soon ill health caught up with him and he was hospitalized. The doctors advised, he should do away with alcohol all together. He agreed and they commenced treatment. But Vicky smuggled alcohol into the hospital, and dad was glad to drink since nature has no medicine for a guilty conscience.

He had ignored his mother, he had left his wife, he was not taking care of his children, and he was giving Vicky every cent he could get. Whatever he was doing was too much to bear with a sober mind. Vicky had one strategy, since some circles looked at her as the second wife, she must get land; she had to take possession of the vineyard. Vicky had forced dad to write down a will that she should be given land when he dies; Vicky was illiterate and did not understand the intricacies. She did not understand dad owned no land.

Dad was in a quagmire, there was no way he could get the title deed for the land as Jefu would not consent. Jefu on the other hand, could not evict us legally. We did not own the land as it was in his name. In his greediness he wanted to take his cake and have it. He did not want to refund purchase consideration but wanted the land back.

We saw the unfairness meted on dad and each day we were praying. But as if God had discarded our prayers, things got worse. Jefu boasted that he had told his snakes to confuse dad and ensure dad's money never helped him. He added that he wanted to punish dad till he died, then he would possess the land. At this juncture we almost believed what he was saying was true. We lived each day with our hearts in our mouth.

Jefu started to assemble his family at night and they uprooted the cassava and the sweet potatoes we had planted. He destroyed all crops on the land he sold us. For trees, they did not cut them but they peeled a section of the bark around the tree, and the tree died slowly thereafter. They broke all bananas and trampled them down. We used to wake up in the morning and the site made us shade tears.

Just seeing or meeting Jefu himself was enough to give me goose bumps and stomach ulcers. Dad had cardiac arrest and he gave up the ghost. Jefu gathered his family and enthusiastically told them that my father was dead. He was going to take possession of the vineyard which he refused to

vacate. There were ululations and joy filled Jefu's family, they slaughtered a fat bull and celebrated.

We buried dad on the land he had bought, his brother had grabbed his ancestral land therefore he refused dad to be buried there. Dad died at 42 years old. His older brother was in mid 80s. None of the Jefu's family attended the funeral. Before the graves soil could dry, Jefu had filed a case to evict us. However, he could only evict dad, and since he was dead, he enjoined mother to the suit. The judge threw away the case on grounds that he could not sue a dead person and such cases abated if one died, he added that mother had no 'locus standi' to be sued. For the first time since Jefu wanted to evict us in 22 years, he was distraught.

In his anger, he went and slashed all vegetation on the piece of land and shallowly planted sisal haphazardly. Each day he would cut thorns from his other farm and throw them here and there on 'our land'. One thing had become clear, he could not repossess the land, he could not evict us but we could not own the land since his consent was required.

In his desperation he released some of his cobras to roam freely on 'our land' in the hope they would bite us to death. Fortunately the snakes slithered away when they heard footsteps of a person and never attacked anybody. When cornered, they hissed loudly rose and expanded their jaws into a hood, this gave someone time to run away, sensing there was no danger

they glided away. Neighbours started sympathizing with us and they helped us kill most of them. They also advised us to keep paraffin handy, if any entered the house, we were to pour paraffin on it. We were also to burn a piece of old rubber tyre regularly for the smell and smoke kept them at the bay.

Then things started changing rapidly, all of Jefu's cows and goats died. No one knows what happened, but they died. Nzioa sugar factory was run down that it had no capacity to pay cane farmers. Nearly all cane farmers uprooted or burned their sugarcane as it was useless. Others sold their sugarcane to jaggery companies which offered a poor price that everyone vowed never to plant the cash crop again.

Jefu's children were putting him under pressure to subdivide the land so that each would be independent. Everyone had come to know Jefu was just human and weak; his children no longer respected him. In fact they regretted he had wasted their time and never educated them. It was a time everyone learned it was not wise to listen to superstitions and omens. It was a time we knew we should not have listened to Jefu's threats and jesting. Nobody should have abandoned their dream because of superstitions. Father should not have feared Jefu. We should not have feared Jefu. It is Satan's tactics to impose fear on human beings so that they don't obey God's principles and thus miss His rewards. Satan will always use human beings to snatch (or try to snatch) God's rewards from you.

Having a careless outlook may make one miss his reward. Moses allowed the sins of the Israelites to weigh him down. He should have realised the Israelites never accepted him as a leader ever since he killed an Egyptian in his stay in Egypt. He should have concentrated on his task and let everyone perish because of his sin. But he failed to do so; as a result he only saw Canaan but never entered it. His injudicious viewpoint snatched the reward from him.

Saul was instructed in his wars to destroy the enemy and all that belonged to him. Instead he became proud. His men did not destroy the choice livestock of the enemy and he built a monument for himself. His injudicious viewpoint snatched the reward, the kingdom, from him. Samuel told him rebellion was as bad as witchcraft and arrogance as sinful as idolatry. Notice that superstitions are rooted in witchcraft and idolatry, thus they snatch someone's reward if he believes in them.

Hezekiah should have learnt from Saul's account and remained vigilant. Though God no longer required his people to annihilate their enemies, his people were to guard against being close to them and sharing with them their secrets, and showing them the rewards God had given them. When God healed Hezekiah, he was so joyful that when the King of Babylonia sent him a letter to express his well being for getting well, he showed the messengers all his possessions. In later years, the Babylonians carted away the Israelites rewards the king Hezekiah had accumulated to their country. They snatched their reward.

Your antagonists will always be on the lookout to snatch your rewards. That is why Jesus said, **'Provide for yourself purses that don't wear out and save your riches in heaven, where they will never decrease, because no thief can get them, and no moth can destroy them**'. Learning and allowing God to teach you his principles is storing your riches in heaven. No antagonist can snatch this reward (knowledge) unless you allow him to control you with fear. As you ponder about storing your wealth in heaven, the next chapter will show you how God would protect your riches (rewards) here on earth from being snatched by your antagonists.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

22. Ephesians 6: 1-3
25. Proverbs 23:22
44. Numbers 20:28; Deuteronomy 33:1
45. 1 Samuel 15: 1-35
46. 2 kings 20:12-19
47. Luke 12:33

## Chapter 5
## God wades off reward snatchers

***"Put it in writing, because it is not yet time for it to come true. But the time is coming quickly, and what I show you will come true. It may seem slow in coming but wait for it; it will certainly take place and it will not be delayed" - Habakkuk 2:3***

Most of us have had wild dreams especially when we were children and our thinking had not been distorted by the hectic pace of life. Some had wished to become great footballers,

actors, renowned doctors, pastors, bishops, priests and even presidents of a country. Few have lived those dreams because over time we encountered reward snatchers and our hope shrunk, we become disheartened and abandon the dream.

Man's first dream to fly can be traced to the Greek mythology of Daedalus and Icarus. It is said the king Minos escaped from a labyrinth prison of Crete. Daedalus and his son who had built the labyrinth were suspected to have revealed to Minos the escape route. King Theseus imprisoned them in the labyrinth they had built; therefore, father and son could not escape unless they went up the sky.

They made wings out of wax, blankets, cloths and feathers. Daedalus instructed his son not to fly to low as the vapour from the ocean would wet the feathers making them heavy and thus he would be unable to fly. He warned him against flying too high as the sun would melt the wax, the feathers would drop, and he would fall drowning. They escaped the prison by flying but Icarus did not heed his father warning and flew too close to the sun. The wax melted and he plunged into the sea and drowned. That is how man's dream to fly was killed till the Wright brothers turned things around.

After Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone, other dreamers suggested that the telephone ought to be portable and at that time it was a pipe dream. I am sure if Bell resurrected now and saw some smart phones he would think he had

resurrected on another planet and not the earth he lived. Maybe he also had that dream of having a mobile phone, he would be happy his dream had come true.

In 1980s Pluto was considered a planet. Nowadays it not a planet or is referred to as a dwarf planet. Jesus said His father in heaven had not stopped working. Who knows, He worked on Pluto to change? And is He still working on the billions of billions of planets and stars in the sky. Suppose God made a planet like Neptune habitable, our one year would be 165 years since this planet takes 165 earth years to orbit the sun. This is not a pipe dream; scientists believe there must be another planet that is habitable.

But Christians believe God is creating new earths and new heavens. When scientists discover it many years later, it will just mean God had finished creating it. Scientist belief they can recreate the dead person from stem cells, Christians know God would do something similar to that by resurrecting the dead. Scientist belief they can elongate man's life, Christians believe man will live forever. Just imagine we are living on Neptune, 1 year =165 years, is that not something closest to eternal life? God has put dreams in scientists, he has put dreams in Christians and all these dreams are valid. However it is only God who can keep them alive by fighting reward snatchers.

Joseph dreamt that he would be a prominent leader and his 11 brothers and parents would serve him. Immediately the reward

snatchers tried to destroy the dream. His father rebuked him questioning if he thought his mother or he himself would bow down to him. That alone was an effective reward snatcher. If your parents don't believe in you, it is a herculean task succeeding. It is an uphill task travelling the road less travelled. To add salt to the injury, Joseph's brothers hated him for the dream.

Joseph would have grown bitter with his brothers or become downcast since his father had no faith in him, but he dreamt again. To snatch his reward, his brothers then plotted killing him. God's angels protected him and instead he was sold as a slave and in the spiritual world, this jumpstarted the dream's fulfilment. Do you think Joseph achieved his dream by only daring to dream? No! Joseph was rewarded because he remained faithful to God. Ask any youth nowadays if they were Joseph and Potiphar's wife made advances, most of them would tell you, they would have shed their clothes without thinking. They use a Swahili word that say, 'kesi baadaye', which loosely translates to; "let me do it, the problems that arise I shall solve them as they rise".

Because God rewards those who have of faith in Him, he rewarded Joseph who refused to gratify the fleeting pleasures of the body but remained faithful to Him. Joseph maintained a great attitude, as a slave he worked hard, as a prisoner he made himself useful. God's statutes guided him always. Instead of whining he did something. He lived by the maxim, 'whatever

your hands find to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom'

Hezekiah trusted in God, he was faithful and obeyed him. Like any king his dream was to rule Judah fairly and protect it from invasion by the enemies. The Assyrian emperor insulted him for trusting in God. He implored him to surrender willingly as God would be of no help to him. The Assyrian official ridiculed him that even if he gave him 2 000 horses he won't find soldiers to ride them. He added even if he made alliances with Egypt he would not escape their hand. Hezekiah consulted Isaiah the prophet and he re-assured him not to be afraid. Hezekiah prayed and God answered his prayer, an angel of God fulfilled his dream of protecting Jerusalem by slaying 185 000 Assyrian soldiers.

Nehemiah had a dream to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Sanballat ridiculed him. Tobiah joined Sanballat and he was of the opinion that the wall they were building was so weak that it could be knocked down by a fox. But Nehemiah prayed to God to listen to their mocking and render them useless. Sanballat and Tobiah plotted to attack them, but they did not prevail. Nehemiah completed the wall.

What dream do you have? Are you afraid of reward snatchers such that you are immobilised? Jefu was worried I might revenge for what he did to my dad. He spiritedly threw a spell on

me so that I might not pass my high school examination. Since I had started walking with God, the curses were like birds flying having nowhere to perch. I passed my exams. He was the first reward snatcher.

The other reward snatcher was a relative who promised me at my father's funeral that he would take me to work in his company. No sooner had we buried dad than he entered his Mercedes Benz and disappeared in a thin air.

Another one advised me I should seek work at any bank since D people who were working in the bank were damn rich. I should forget all other nonsense like seeking further education and look for work in the bank.

After I had wasted a lot of time mark timing or stagnating in one place, I finally got a chance to join an accounting college. In their last spirited attempt to snatch my reward, a cousin who lived near the college took me and another quickly enrolled for an adult programme. While this one near college delayed me, this one that enrolled for adult education tried to swindle my mother of any money she had to further his studies, promising a quick refund that was never to be.

When mother had given out the first lot of public trustee money she had withdrawn, the other cousin expunged me unceremoniously from his home. I was home again and back to the drawing board. Once bitten twice shy, we all became

smarter. Fortunately the college kept my chance open, this time we instructed the public trustee to be making a cheque in favour of the college and not giving us money. The dream was delayed but not stopped. God rewarded me for remaining faithful and maintaining the right attitude. God wades off reward snatchers.

You have to understand God loves you. He has blessed you and even if you don't see your potential, your antagonists and dream snatchers see it. Sometimes you can learn your worth and potential in the fear written in your enemies eyes. Vicky feared any of my family members being educated; he kept my father in stupor so that he could not think objectively and spend on our education. Jefu feared that I would pass my examinations, he bewitched me. My cousins did not want me to continue with higher education; they misadvised my mother and destroyed any source of our funds they could think of. God thwarted their plans, the very reward they wanted to snatch from me, God gave me.

Listen to God, not your dream snatchers. Your dream snatchers may be your friends and your kith and kin. One of my cousin happily remarked that I would die a drunkard like my father. My first work supervisor belittled my work and was of the view I was not doing things right. Your supervisors would like you to continue working hard as you are. God's servants are hard workers. We obey our seniors with fear and trembling; and do all work with a sincere heart as though we are serving Jesus Christ. We are not eye servants that do work only when a senior

is watching us because we want their approval, but with all our heart we do what God wants. But your supervisors may snatch your reward by ensuring you stagnate, you are not promoted or you don't pursue further education.

One such servant was Jacob. He gave his all at the work place. Laban, his employer, learned by divination that God had blessed him because of Jacob. Therefore he spiritedly wanted Jacob to stagnate and continue serving him and never to exploit his potential. He wanted to snatch away Jacob's reward. Jacob had bought Esau's birthright with a morsel of food, as a result of Esau's impatience. He was thus a blessed man and needed to claim his reward from God.

Jacob wanted to leave Laban's service and pursue his full potential. Laban established some tough conditions he knew would never be fulfilled as an enticement to retain Jacob. God waded off Laban as a reward snatcher by ensuring Jacob met all the conditions and received his reward beyond his wildest dream! Whatever Vision God has given you, if you realise you are blessed, even if it delays, it will be fulfilled since God himself shall ensure it comes to pass.

When king Balak wanted Balaam to curse the Israelites so that they don't get their reward of taking over Canaan, instead God caused Balaam to bless them. Balak knew when Balaam pronounced a blessing, people were blessed and when he pronounced a curse, they are placed under a curse. But God

has the final say. No one could curse if God said no! God will wades off your reward snatchers, no one will put you under a curse, and instead He will bless you, because you follow his principles.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

5. John 5:16
6. Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1
7-9. Genesis 37:5-46:30
10. 2 Kings 22
11. Nehemiah 1-12
18. Ephesians 6:5, 6
19. Genesis 30:7
21. Numbers 22:1-24:25

## Chapter 6
## God will give you your reward

***"Do not be afraid, Abram. I will shield you from danger and give you a great reward". –Genesis 15:1***

Hosea said, "My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children." –NIV. All my villagers were church goers and had been christened. But they did not believe and trust the power of the word of God. That's why they held fast on

their traditional beliefs. Let's look at the few I had mentioned at the onset of chapter four.

An owl hooting inside ones homestead does not mean someone would die. Hill (1938) was of the view that the mind not only forms our inner landscape, it creates our outer circumstances. This clearly means since the fear of dying when an owl hoots was placed in the mind of villagers; some had hyper fear that eventually killed them. It was never the hooting of the owl, but their mind creating the death due to pre-conditioning.

Such conditioning can be explained by Ivan Pavlov's dog training. Whenever he rang the bell, dogs knew it was meal time and they started salivating. Eventually the dogs associated ringing of the bell with food and they would salivate at the sound of a bell even if it was not mealtime. Thus the villagers were conditioned to link the howl of an owl with death and they started dying at the sound. They were also conditioned, to break the jinx by chasing the bird away and not sleeping afterwards. This was ignorance and they died due to lack of knowledge. They missed the reward of peace of mind due to this false notion.

Leaving the house in the morning was also a weighty matter for my villagers. They were striving to have certainty in their life. It was pointless to peg how ones day would crumble on who one met in the morning. Imagine staying indoors just because you met a person of your gender or a black animal the first thing in

the morning or you stumbled while walking! Imagine missing a big business opportunity or a job interview because of this!

That is why God appropriately required, **"Let no one be found... who practises divination... interprets omens..."**- NIV. Having some uncertainty in one's life is what makes it worth living; you will strive on to improve your situation, you will cast your cares on God. One may also miss out opportunities due to fear of unspecified happenings measured by a doubtful metric which is based on probability, the same uncertainty he is supposed to be avoiding. The best way to deal with uncertainty is for one to do his best, trusting God to protect and defend him, keeping him safe from all hidden dangers and all deadly diseases.

Neighbours' animals like cats, dogs, hens, pigeons, snakes and ducks were not supposed to enter your house. If they did, it was believed they had come or sent to 'plant' charms and amulets. The charms and amulets would make a member or members of the family sick, retard their development or bring them any other bad luck. It was believed the animals were not real animals but a jinni taking the shape of an animal.

Granted, in the biblical times, animals talked like human beings, angels assumed human bodies. Similar stories exist in all races of the world. In his interview with the devil, Hill (1938), the devil told him that, "one of my cleverest devices for mind control is fear...the fear of poverty, criticism, ill health, loss of love, old

age, and death." The Bible does talk of the existence of the devil; it talks candidly of his activities. And like Hill, it agrees Satan's most effective weapon to immobilize the human race is fear. Most people would be successful if they cast out fear. For instance development in my village was hampered due to fear; people would not construct permanent houses.

Paul told Timothy, **"for God has not given us the spirit of fear, but that of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"**- KJV. If my villagers had knowledge they would have realised their fear is from the devil. Someone was so keen on curtailing their development. Otherwise they should have had power, love and a sound mind.

When one was taking any drink, even just water, he was to pour down some before drinking. By so doing the god of drinks who was believed to live underground would cleanse the drink and remove toxins from it, making it safe to drink. Paul agrees there are many gods. But the village water was clean and pure, originating from a rock and the area being unpolluted. No god cleansed the water.

One was to be careful of the tree he planted outside his compound. It was understood some trees where hideouts for the devil. Some trees like the umbrella tree, it was believed they killed the owner once the roots grew to touch the owner's house. Some trees were believed to be powerful to undo the works of witchcraft or deter witches while others aided them. The folks

who claimed they did not involve themselves with witchcraft avoided the trees whose scented flowers opened at night. It was alleged the fragrance attracted evil spirits including snakes.

These beliefs were based on fear. There is no record a tree can kill someone by just growing. I am not underestimating the power of the devil, for he can use a belief to do something, to instil fear. Granted scented night flowers attracted beetles and moths, moths attracted lizards and geckos and lizards and geckos would attract snakes. Trees can not be a hide out for the devil but a witch or a thief can use them as a temporary hide out if cornered. Trees can only kill if one consumed their products or their sap came into contact with their skins or wounds.

It was habitual for residents not to build permanent houses in view of the fact that they believed the spirit of the dead still roamed the house after his demise. Therefore if one spouse died, the remaining one had to pull down the house of the deceased before re-marrying to prevent his spirit roaming in the house which would kill the new spouse. This was based on Satan's weapon, fear, the Bible is categorical that **'the living know they are going to die, but the dead know nothing'**. It was also Satan's weapon to ensure the villagers walloped in poverty. Wealth gives people power, poverty makes them vulnerable and fearful.

If ones hand itched and he felt like scratching it, especially the palm, it meant one was going to get hold of or find some money.

A similar thing happened when one's eyes twitched, it meant he was going to see something good or get money. And if one met ants relocating, there was going to be a feast in his homestead. Important visitors or relatives would be visiting him.

Ants relocate for a number of reasons. Either their nest has been attacked by pests or fungi or it was leaking. They usually carry their eggs which look like rice, this is what was associated with a feast since rice was normally cooked in feasts only, and otherwise people ate Ugali. These three superstitions were based on the fear of uncertainty. Unlike that hooting of an owl which was negative, these superstitions were positive, but they still were forms of divination. **"Let no one be found... who practises divination... interprets omens..."** it is like wishing to win a lottery. Those who worship God know hard work will give them the necessary money as many feasts as they want as one has to rejoice for the work of their hands.

People were too cautious of how they stored their clothes, shoes and ornaments. Bodily products like hair and nails were to be disposed off carefully in a pit latrine. It is was believed those who kept the Cobra snake collected dressing articles which included clothes, shoes, watches, socks, innerwear, necklace, bracelets and bodily products. The items were put in the pot where the snake laid its eggs. When it was protecting the eggs till they hatched, it was whispered that the owner could control anybody whose articles were in the pot during this period. For instance, if he wanted to copulate with a neighbour's

wife, he would just intone the words over the pot then go and seek the woman. The woman would be so confused that she would submit to the man's demands without knowing. Similarly if he wanted to steal a neighbour's possession, he would speak the words to the pot, and then go carry the act. He would do it seamlessly and he would never be caught. He could also make one sick or die by just talking to the pot provided an article of the persons clothing was in the pot. The snake was a god of wealth and a protector. It protected the owner from evil eyes and spirits. It also made the owner to grow wealthy.

This belief was also based on fear. Cobra snakes were known to lay eggs at the beginning of the rainy season and protected them during the rainy season. At that time mosquitoes also multiplied exponentially, and it was common for most people to become sick or even die. At that time the American government through Population Service International had not started distributing free mosquito nets. People becoming sick and someone wishing them sick was just a coincidence. People had big parcels of land, the climate was favourable and anyone could grow wealthy.

It is only those who kept snakes that were confident enough to pursue wealth that they grew rich for they believed they were gods of wealth. The rest sunk into superstition and were afraid to amass wealth. My village's morals were wanting, polygamy was rampant, and a woman was believed to belong to a clan. Sometimes, especially during the circumcision ceremony people

were possessed with evil spirits and it was quite normal for anyone to engage in promiscuity. Therefore a woman could give in to sex because she thought it was her duty to do so but not because someone had uttered words over a cobra hatching eggs.

In spite of my village being enveloped in superstitions, the place had reliable and predictable rainy seasons. God rewarded us according to our faith at that time. Though we were poor by any standards imaginable, we never lacked what to eat. Mother ensured sweet potatoes and cassava were always available. We planted some maize and beans during the long rainy season. Our vegetables grew wildly, and they included; the amaranth, Black jack, wandering Jew, Jewish Malloy and black night shade. During the dry spell that spanned from November to late February we ate the tender leaves of cassava and sweet potatoes as vegetables. Occasionally we had eggs from our free range chicken but that was intermittent as often our chicken were wiped out by Newcastle and other diseases.

As children we interacted freely with neighbourhood children oblivious of any danger. The village well was a common meeting place therefore we spend some time playing and chatting away, nineteen to the dozen when we went to fetch water. Some long time friendship that developed into lasting marriages were hatched at the well. It was at the well that anyone kept abreast with the village grapevine.

The well was a permanent spring of water that burbled out of a stone. The well exists up to the present time and no one knows the origin of the water. But from my alimentary geography, it might be a collection of underground rain water that found their outlet through the rock. The water was sparkling clean and there is no record of anybody contracting water borne disease by drinking the water even without boiling. None of the villagers boiled the water for drinking purposes. The water was our collective reward from God.

The pressure of the spring was constant and it never dropped even during the dry spell between November and March. Seasonal tributaries dried but the spring was always there asserting its authority. The spring filled a twenty litre container in exactly 32 seconds.

The force of the spring was strong enough to blow a child under five years away. However the spring had never left anybody dancing with the angels since it developed into a very shallow stream that snaked it way to river Khalaba 20 kilometres away. The spring was a permanent land mark that it was used to tell direction of any homestead. Since every homestead had a path leading to the stream, a visitor could just trace the spring first, then find a way to the homestead he needed.

I can therefore confidently say God rewarded us due to my mothers and my paternal grandmother's prayers. We had where to sleep, we had food always, we had clean water and

unpolluted environment. The rewards may look humble and basic to humans, but our faith at the time allowed us to receive that, and we were content and greatly thankful.

God promised to give Abraham a reward. But Abraham did not want unspecified reward and asked God what was the need of a reward if his servant would be heir for all he worked for. To create a vision in his mind, God took him outside and showed him the stars; he promised him that his descendants shall be as numerous as the stars he saw up the sky. Because he believed, God added him additional rewards of long life, cursing whoever cursed him, blessing whoever blessed him and all nations blessing themselves through him.

Ruth left her relatives to live with Naomi and comfort her always for having lost a husband and all her children. There was no Guarantee Ruth would live a normal life again and be married. But because she chose to serve the true God, even Boaz was amazed by her faithfulness. Boaz said, 'may the Lord reward you for what you have done. May you have a full reward from God of Israel, to whom you have come for protection!' Ruth was rewarded abundantly. Today, she is a model of faith and whenever the earthly ancestors of Jesus Christ are mentioned, Ruth's name pops up.

Therefore, God will reward you. King Solomon Said, **'... I was proud of everything I had worked for, and all this was my**

**reward'**. If you live by God's principle, you will also be rewarded. You will be proud of everything you have worked for.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

1. Hosea 4:6
5 Deuteronomy 18:10, 14.
7. Numbers 22:28
8. 2 Timothy 1:7
24. Genesis 15:1
25. Ruth 24:11; Matthew 1:5
26. Ecclesiastes 2:10

## Chapter 7

## God will provide your spiritual and emotional needs.

***"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your***

***hearts and your mind in Christ Jesus." – Philippians 4:6, 7 NIV***

God will provide all your spiritual needs if only you believe he will reward you for every act of faith in him. Acts of faith means - trying as much as you can to follow his instruction on a given aspect of life. He knows you are not perfect and he will not judge you harshly if you don't reach the mark. That determination to comply with his statutes is what matters. He has given guidance on how families should conduct themselves.

Firstly, the Bible requires persons who wish to marry to prepare himself/herself **'in the field'** and **'afterwards build their house'**. This means that they should prepare themselves to have an income to sustain the family. They should learn some skill or some trade to earn money. Money is the answer for everything as espoused by the Bible; families will need food, shelter and clothing, and the rest of other wants as they are blessed. All these provisions are acquired using money. The obligation to provide basic needs lies on the man. The woman is only a helper, in proverbs 31:10-31; such a woman does not eat the bread of idleness.

After a person has prepared himself/herself in the field, he/she can then marry. There is no ideal age that is recommended for one to marry. But there is guidance that one should do so when one is past the flower of youth. The flower of youth is that age when there is hormonal imbalance and youth are likely to make

decisions on whims rather than sound judgement. It is risky to marry at this stage as one will not critically examine ones mate but will keep rubbishing warning signs and painting their mate perfect only to regret in future when that bliss is over and they can then see in black and white.

Though people recommend some courtships or 'knowing each other', I won't recommend that, and people are free to do what they want. What I would recommend is that Couples should be God fearing, not pretending to be. A person that respects God will obey his commandments and that is the requisite for a happy marriage. Jacob had the advantage of courtship where he lived with Rachael and was able to know her better. Isaac did not have the privilege of courtship. His marriage was arranged. Isaac's marriage was full of love, it is written, "Isaac loved Rebecca, and so he was comforted for the loss of his mother". Isaac's and Jacob's marriages lasted not because of courtship but because they were all God fearing.

God fearing couples are kind and considerate to each other. God exhorts us to get rid of all bitterness, passion, anger, shouting, insults and hateful feelings. We should instead be tender –hearted and forgive one another. A good wife speaks with gentle wisdom; she does not start unnecessary arguments and is not nagging.

God fearing couples understand there are levels of authority and they respect them willingly. Wives respect their husbands as an

act of worship to God and husbands sacrifice all for their wives as Jesus Christ gave his life for us. Couples should have compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. They should be tolerant with each other and forgive one another whenever any has a complaint against the other, if they add love to these, they would have a perfect bond.

God fearing couples would communicate clearly with each other. Proverbs 25:11 is emphatic that an idea well expressed is like a design of gold set in silver. Good communication is appealing like that design. In addition, we need all information to succeed. And like I have said elsewhere in this book, kind words cheer and encourage the soul. Good communication cheers up one and removes anxiety.

God fearing couples would remain faithful to each other. God only recommends sex between married couples. Any other form of sex is termed as defilement. This is misuse of sex. As I mentioned before those engaging in misuse of sex may survive for a time or even years but it will destroy them. God fearing couples know it is their obligation to honour God by being faithful and not engaging in promiscuity even if they would get away with it.

God fearing couples apply the Bible counsel to solve problems that arise. In 1 Peter 3 we find out that wives can just win over their husbands by their conduct, when they see how pure and reverent they are, they are touched. 3 Timothy 3:16, 17 informs

us that all scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults and giving instruction.

God fearing couples know they must bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. They should never be cruel to their children.

Once parents have done what they can, they can rest assured God will provide for them. There is much uncertainty in the world, but that is not their battle. They can trust God with all their heart and never leaning on their own understanding. They should let the peace of God surround them. Like Stormie Omartian once wrote in her book, she could just go into her kid's bedroom and pray for it, and God heard her prayer, He took care of the kid wherever it was. This allowed her to be emotionally and spiritually relaxed.

God knows as human beings we get tired, we despair and are at times emotionally worn out. He calls out to us, **'come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me because I am gentle and humble in spirit and you will find rest. For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light'**.

Notice that we are always carrying burdens. One may be addicted to drugs, one may be a drunkard and yet another may be a thief. That habit you resent or like is a burden you are

carrying. The change you crave to make is the casting off the burden. Unfortunately you have to cast one burden and take another. Otherwise you will revert to your previous burden and be twice worse off than your were at the beginning. The lightest of all burdens is learning God's principles and living in line with them. More gratifying is the principles have a reward.

Duhigg (2012) illustrates the habit loop as; cue, routine and reward. For example, a person burdened by the smoking habit will fast get that motivation or craving for a cigarette (cue). Then the process of lighting and actual smoking of the cigarette follows (routine). Finally he relaxes and his mind is at peace (reward). For this person to cast away the burden of smoking successfully, he must take up another burden with a lesser detailed routine but with a greater reward than the cigarette. He could join a gymnasium. The end result of workout is a relaxed mind. But which routine is easier; lighting a cigarette and smoking in an easy chair or exerting oneself on a treadmill sweating profusely? Your guess is as good as mine; the person is not likely to give up smoking for workouts!

Suppose he exchanged it with Jesus' burden. The burden is lighter than smoking. One can download a Bible from the net for less money than the price of one cigarette. One can read the Bible anywhere in any position. The rewards of one reading the Bible like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control are above any law. No one can come up with a law to control them. No one can be offended

by them. Everyone would like them. God's principles then are like a onetime investment and you get rewards for a lifetime. You have to buy cigarettes regularly; you have to be careful while smoking to avoid other persons smoking passively. The practise harms your health.

That is why God fittingly asked, 'why spend money on what does not satisfy? Why spend your wages and still be hungry?' All other habits are costly and the eventually leave one empty, emotionally and spiritually battered. Only Jesus' burden is light since it is free. Its routines like prayer, reading the Bible, fasting and worship are absolutely free and beneficial. In fact God gives invitation to all, 'come everyone who is thirsty - here is water! Come, you that have no money - buy corn and eat! Come! Buy wine and drink - it will cost nothing!' If you take a step to approach God who is beseeching you, He will certainly provide for you your spiritual and emotional needs.

At work place you will have colleagues who will drain you emotionally. Some may be planning your downfall, some to trap you and yet others to curtail your progress. They will be watching what you do closely. Daniel's colleagues scrutinized him and realised he prayed several times a day. They hatched a plot to stop him ascending the corporate ladder by turning such prayers unlawful. Daniel must have been spiritually and emotionally drained. God strengthen him, he kept praying.

I also encountered emotional and spiritual doldrums while working with a government agency. I was more qualified than my supervisors and since they were afraid I might replace them, they schemed to taint my name and ensure I stagnated. Several beautiful and enchanting ladies were paid and sent to sweetly talk to me and lure me into coitus activities.

The management made sure it provided the necessary environment to make me fall like sending us to prestigious hotels for unnecessary training, workshops and seminars. It also on several occasions made sure we worked past midnight and could only go home when the streets were deserted. I could have fallen but when I look back it is not only the word of God that helped me, angels were send to help me and restrain me. Proverbs 2:16 says that **God will protect you from any immoral woman who tries to seduce you with her smooth talk, who is faithless to her own husband and forgets her sacred vows**.

A colleague, who was posted to agency some months after me, fell for the trap with dire consequences. He was found lifeless half burnt and the official verdict was he passed on of accidental fire. He used to drink; therefore one time when drunk he tried to light a paraffin stove and since he was unstable, he toppled over it and got burnt. But the ears on ground had a different story.

The guy was primed to replace one of the departmental bosses. Since he was honest and open in his dealings, he posed a

problem to the management. So they paid and sent a particular beautiful lady of African-Asian origin to enjoy with him the honey pot. She agreed with the guy and the lady kept updating her financiers of the progress. Apparently the lady informed her financiers it was all systems go and the match was to take place at the guy's bedsitter. Her financiers informed her husband and the man put off the life of the guy.

On my part, when several attempt by ladies failed, I saw some of them became so desperate, and this only raised my antennas and I resolved to avoid them. It was mind boggling for married women to lust for a man to the extent of being disturbed. But in reality they were only afraid of losing their source of income! They were paid to lure me into sin. The bolds ones asked me if I was gay. One told me she could be either way, straight or gay. I had to stand my ground and tell them I was married and I believed in one man one woman.

At that time they were in a company of three. They laughed sardonically for a prolonged time. Then one of them told me the issues of ladies I should ask them. It was only women who knew the father to their children. Probably the kids I term as mine are not. I asked if they we insinuating my wife was cheating. They all chorused yes! Then one added I would be missing a great opportunity if I didn't do the same with any of them. I became irritated with them and informed them I was a fool for just discussing stupidity with them; they should disappear from my

presence and never appear before me unless it was work related issues. They went away and never enticed me again.

But the management was not yet done. However they stopped sponsoring me to attend professional trainings, workshops and seminars. I had to fund myself from my salary. One day we were discussing some report with a colleague. Then when we were having some chit chat after the discussion over a cup of tea, the man trailed off and started naming for me gay employees in our organization and those in the city. I kept quiet then calmly asked him what he was driving at. He told me he had been told I was gay so he was just helping me to be in good company.

Nobody could believe I could not fall for the sex trap. They tried another approach. Female interns were put under my supervision and my movement's scrutinized. This failed because my boss did not put into consideration the Pareto principle. Most agency employees were relatives employed politically and it did not matter whether they worked or not. I was employed competitively, and I had to ensure I worked.

Only less than twenty percent of the agency's employees actually worked, the eighty percent just loitered about or where used as spies. Like my supervisor, she never worked at all; she was always preening and gathering rumours which she fed the big bosses. Therefore I had no time to be sexually aroused by girls struggling to stand on their feet, considering my workload. In fact I pitied the interns and wished then well in life.

When the sex trap of interns failed, someone must have done his homework. A very responsible woman we had worked together visited me at lunch time and animatedly discussed with me plants and anything to do with agriculture. I was raised in the village and plants are part of me. Talks about plants are my thing. Slowly plant discussion became something this lady pursued for discussion with me at lunchtime showing me photos of 'her beautiful plants'.

Then it dawned on me someone must have been trolling my Facebook account, and realised I was a plant enthusiast. He completely combed for gardening and florist groups I had joined and sent this woman to befriend me. It is believed in my area a man befriending a woman was like a long distance traveller using a sugarcane like his walking stick, he will eventually chew the cane. Having detected the woman's intention, my respect for her waned and instead of going for lunch I joined some lunch hour prayers, thereby nipping in the bud her calculations.

Then it was concluded I was wary of fellow employees. An outsider who had similar interest to me was to be used. There came a seventh Adventist lady directed to my office to sell me books. Nobody knew my religion, but they guessed by my strictness I must have been an Adventists. When the devil is intent on making you fall, he will not come to you like that ugly red creature having a tail and a hooked fork we see in books

drawing or movies; he will came packaged to mirror the desires of your heart.

The lady was beautiful, decently dressed. She introduced herself and told me she was selling books. I told her I was not interested in religious books, nevertheless, I told the lady I would take a copy but I won't read.

She became regular and used drop books for me on credit, which I would pay at my own pace. Then one day she came in the evening just when I was winding my office work with three big books, one was titled back to Eden, the second Enjoy Life and the third Physical Exercise. I just started laughing and asked where she was taking the books. She said it was a gift to me. I remarked I could not carry such big books; it was cumbersome to me particularly because I won't read them. She then offered to carry them for me to my house. Immediately alarm bells went off in my mind.

I told her to sit down and asked her; apart from giving me books was there anything she needed from me. She then narrated to me how she was unhappy in her marriage. I asked the source of her unhappiness. Was it that the man denied her conjugal rights, he did not provide for the family or he was cruel? She told me none of the above; the man was humble, church goer, good in bed and provided all her needs. Then I asked if she had children, she told me she had a thirteen year old girl. I told her she had no reason to be sad, that was self imposed sadness.

She cried that I did not understand her, his man wanted another child but she just couldn't conceive! I asked if she ever went for medical check up. She told me she had done that several times and doctors always said there wasn't anything wrong with her, her ovaries were fine.

She wiped her tears with the hem of her dress deliberately revealing her biker shorts, then quickly straightening her dress to cover her thighs as if realising she had done a mistake. But I just marvelled, she was a very good actress and you could fall for it! Then I released the bombshell, "how do I help you now?" She hesitated, and then she told me she had identified me as a good God fearing man, perhaps I could pray for her or do something she gets the baby.

The parts of jig-saw puzzle fell together! I realised she did not identify me as she had said but she was directed. I told her to leave the books I would carry them myself and paid her in full. I told her to go and never come back but be faithful to her husband. I added that, if she really believed in her faith she was supposed to emulate Sarah and wait as long as it takes. I was pissed off with her and did not wish to see her again in my life. She looked surprised but obeyed my order and went away.

Apart from your workplace, your neighbours may constantly be scheming to bring you down and ensure you do not succeed. They may use malicious unverified grape vine, they may steal

from you, and actually attempt or threaten to kill you. It may demoralize and bring you low spiritually and emotionally.

Prophet Elijah after he had destroyed the Baal's prophets, Jezebel threatened to kill him. Notwithstanding that he had called fire from heaven which licked a wet carcass to ashes; he was afraid and worried, very afraid. He was down spiritually and emotionally that he requested God to die. God comforted him and send birds to give him food. He gave him the reward of never being killed by Jezebel.

Jefu, as a neighbour, totally destroyed our peace of mind. He brought us down spiritually and emotionally. It was nerve wrecking to know we would not own the land he sold us. We always planted our crops in fear that Jefu and his kids would uproot them at night. We walked in constant fear of being bitten by one of his cobras or worse still, being spat in the eyes with the cobra's venom.

The good news is, God who took care of Daniel and Elijah. He comforted them and delivered them from their human enemies. The enemies had taken away their peace of mind. Jefu had made us to be emotionally and spiritually disturbed, but God took care of us. The rest is history, and God will continue meeting emotional and spiritual needs of those who live by his principles.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

2. Proverbs 24:27; Ecclesiastes 10:19; 1 Timothy 5:8
3. 1 Corinthians 7:36
4. Genesis 29:1-35; 24:67
5. Ephesians 4:31; Colossian 3:13; proverbs 31:26; 21:19; 25:24; 27:15
6. 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22-31; Galatians 5:22, 23; Colossians 3:13; 1 john 4:18
8. Hebrews 13:4
10. Ephesians 6:4
11. Philippians 4:7
12. Matthew 11:28-30
15. Galatians 5:22, 23
16. Isaiah 55:1, 2
37. 1 kings 18:21-40; 19:1-4; 21:23
39. 1 kings 19:7; Daniel 6:20-24

## Chapter 8
## God will provide your Material needs

***"Look at the birds: they do not sow seeds, gather a harvest and put it in barns; yet your father in heaven takes care of them! Aren't you much more than birds?***

***And why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow: they do not work or make clothes for themselves, but I tell you that not even king Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers." –Matthew 6:26, 28, 29***

One of my relatives joined one of these religions where its followers lived austere life. We reasoned and he told me all rich people serve the devil and all poor people serve God. I could not restrain my laughter. But the guy confidently continued telling me even Jesus said it was as easy for a rich man to go to heaven as it was easy for a Camel to pass through the needles' eye. We read the verses together and we saw the disciples were baffled about the saying. Then I emphasised what Jesus said, 'with men it is impossible but with God all things are possible'. We quickly read proverbs 30.

Proverbs 30:7-9 says, "I ask you, God, to let me have two things before I die: keep me from lying and let me be neither rich nor poor. So give me only as much food as I need. If I have more, I might say that I do not need you. But if I am poor, I might steal and bring disgrace on my God." It has been said a hungry man is an angry man. I told him you don't have to steal in order to

disgrace God's name, just by being hungry, the anger you have is a disgrace. Wishing you had nice things others have is being covetous at heart. God wants you to be happy, to enjoy and live life abundantly.

I drew attention to the relative's smart phone. A person somewhere spent a lot of time discovering and perfecting the gadget. It is because of other people's sweat that he was able to chat with his congregation members via Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube. It was not a good idea to hoard ones talent because you want to live a poor life thinking you are pleasing God. God wants you to use that talent to put a smile on somebody's face. James was of the same view when he asked, "Suppose there are brothers or sisters who need clothes and don't have enough to eat. What good is there in your saying to them, 'God bless you! Keep warm and eat well!'- If you don't give them the necessities of life?" I reasoned, now suppose we all decided to be poor, who would help the other?

It is misleading for a religion to require its members to be poor in order to serve God. It's God who created the gold, who said he does not want you to enjoy it? Which evil father would place food in front of a hungry child and tell it that it should not touch that food? Granted, one can be stricken by poverty that is uncontrollable, which results due to unforeseen occurrences. That is when you can be sure the battles God fights for you include basic necessities as food. David had fought many wars which he attributes his victories to God going before him,

another battle he saw God fight was that he had never seen those hoping in God going hungry or their offspring begging food

There was poverty that came over Zarephath due to drought. There was a widow gathering firewood. We came to know the widow had only flour for one meal remaining. Yet she was unperturbed gathering firewood. Perhaps she knew God would provide for her needs fully. And indeed He was. He sent Elijah to her.

Elijah saw her and told her to give him water to drink. As she was going to get the water, he called out that she should bring him some bread too. The woman swore that she had no bread but a little flour and a drop of olive oil in a jar. It was the last meal for her and her son. Elijah told her not to worry but make him small bread first, and then she could prepare the rest for her family. If she did so, the bowl would never run out of flour or the jar run out of oil till God sends rain or ends that poverty. She believed God gives rewards such as giving her food and the flour and the oil never ran out till the drought was over. To emphasize that it was God rewarding the widow's faithfulness, Jesus said that, there were many widows in Israel but God sent Elijah to only a widow living in Zarephath in the territory of Sidon.

At the time Jefu was uprooting the food crops we planted in our farm at night, we did not have that conviction God will care for

our food needs. But out of the blue Khisa, our other neighbour gave us a piece of land to cultivate freely with the option of buying it. In addition when Jefu and his family had trampled down the banana stalks, they had forgotten to uproot the cassava and sweet potatoes intercropped with the bananas. God made them to yield abundant tubers that they gave us food for three months. When three months had elapsed we had other foodstuffs from Khisa's farm. Other neighbours gave us maize and milk such that we never lacked.

We have been conditioned to pray when we are sick, tempted or facing other problems like injustice but many seldom pray to have food, shelter, clothing and some luxuries. It may have been taught to us that it is being materialistic. But is it? In Haggai 2:8, God says, **"All silver and gold of the world is mine"** we should know this is also a reward from God. We should ask him as much silver and gold we require. He will give us according to our faith. If we limit him, like he who sows scantily, we shall harvest scantily, Jesus himself said which child asks a parent for fish and he gives him a snake, and which child asks for bread and he gives him a stone? And He continued to say if we being evil, and we knew how to do good things to our children, how much more would our heavenly Father do good things for us if we asked!

Someone asked me, 'God should just give me the material needs I want, must I ask?' I gave him an example of a man I bought a motorcycle. I was sure he would use it to carry people

and luggage and earn his daily bread. But the man sold the motorcycle immediately and celebrated the proceeds drinking with his friends. He then continued renting a motorcycle to carry people and luggage. The renting agreement was that, the owner gets 60% of the earnings and the renter gets 40%.

The man went boasting in drinking dens that I was a fool, I just dish out money. He continued that he had taught me a lesson by selling the motorcycle. Now the point is, since the man is my neighbour and rents motorcycles per day, I thought I would empower him by giving him one of his own. But that was not his need. He was comfortable renting and buying him one, I was attacking his ego.

I also told him of another story of our neighbour. After their father had subdivided land to his sons, one sold the whole piece of land immediately. The buyer put up beautiful rental houses on the land right away. The seller having squandered his money came back and rented a single room, from the houses the buyer had put up.

Therefore, God has put in place laws and He cannot bend them to suit an individual's selfish desire. He said man must sweat to earn his bread. By asking, you are sweating. And when you ask God will look at your elaborate plan, how you intend to use to gain more from what you have asked. If he is pleased, He will grant you your request. Imagine asking God for a bicycle and then you sell! Would it have been better to ask for money?

Envisage asking him that you should own land, then He directs your father to give you land. You sell the land and rent a room on the land!

Those who ask have a plan. They know why they are asking. Those who wait to be given do not have a plan, in fact they will question why am I being given this thing in the first place? Then they will dispose it off. Or like in Jesus' parable of talents, they would hide the talent, instead of trading with it or putting it somewhere to earn interest.

Let's consider example of persons who asked and see how they had plans. Jabez prayed to God to bless him and give him much land. He entreated God to keep him from anything evil that might cause him pain. God gave him what he prayed for. Notice that Jabez knew wealth, if it is in the wrong hands; it can bring a lot of pain. He wanted blessing, much land and no pain from the wealth! This is a man who had a plan! He knew what he wanted and how to use it. God was pleased and gave him his request.

Another person was King Solomon. From the proverbs 30: 7-9 we read, he did not require so much wealth as this would have made him proud and forgot God thinking he acquired everything using his own wisdom. He did not want to be poor as it might have led him to steal and thus blaspheming God's name. If you look at Solomon's prayer, he knew what he wanted and how he

would handle it. God was pleased; he gave Him more than he asked. Solomon was the richest man ever during his period.

Asking therefore shows you really need something, and you plan to utilize it to the maximum. But those who wait for handouts or beg don't really need what they will be given and won't multiply it. In fact if God gives you what you have not asked for it would be painful to you instead of being a blessing. That is why the Bible is emphatic that each one is given according to his faith. If you have not prepared yourself to handle large material possession, God will give you just what you require. On the other hand, if God sees you are thoroughly prepared and you will be a blessing to many, He will give you much material items.

One should therefore continue acquiring knowledge to increase his capacity if he wants a lot of material items. One should not shy from learning; our brains were created to learn forever. That is why King Solomon said, **'let the wise listen and add to their learning and let the discerning get guidance... Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still, teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.'** Proverbs 1:5; 9:9 NIV

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

1. Matthew 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25
3. James 2:16
4. Matthew 6:25;
6, 7. 1 Kings 17:9-16; Luke 4:26
14: 1 Chronicles 4:10
16 2 Chronicles 1:11

## Chapter 9
## God will protect you from harm and disasters

***"No harm will overtake you; no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways"- Psalms 91:10, 11 NIV***

The very essence of God instructing us is to make us enjoy life. We are the only living thing that sees rainbow colours. We are able to find pleasure just by viewing different flowers, sceneries like mountains, escarpments, oceans, rivers and even forests. More so, reading a book like this. We are able to smell nice scents. We hear different sounds and enjoy nice music. We eat food with different flavours and savour the sweetness of various fruits. We enjoy the company and presence of our loved ones.

Yet like that nice car you love, you were created. The manufacturer of car sold it with the manual. Very detailed instructions and then penning off with warnings like, 'caution! Use petrol only'. The creator of all things put into place laws governing the universe. Let me talk about our solar system. It brain teases to imagine nine globes rotating on their own axis at supersonic speeds and at the same time, revolving around a

stationary sun at equally high speeds! More mind boggling is that most of these globes have a moon or moons revolving around are them! Near the earth we have over 30 000 asteroids revolving around the sun! It is not fathomable how these items miss to collide with each. I can only say the work of God is perfect and wonderful. He must have put powerful laws to hold all this things in place.

Back on earth, we all know how important the law of gravity is. But have we ever thought sleeping, excreting, eating, need for affection and moving are laws? If we have, we all agree they are beneficial to us. I looked at the major traffic law in my country, all vehicles keep left. Suppose one arrogant person decided to keep right, he may survive for a time but he will be knocked dead eventually. That is what happens with God's law, when we disobey them, we may not die soon, but that law will destroy us soon or later. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, eventually we all die. But we don't have to be too wicked or too foolish, either - why die before we have to? By obeying God, he will protect us from harm and disasters, and then we don't have to die un-timely.

Psalms 1:1, 2 considers a person who is happy to be that one that shuns the advice of wrong people who have said God is of no use but he finds joy in meditating on God's word. For instance sinners may tempt one to attack innocent people for fun and steal from them. But such ill-timed death due to robbery

can be avoided since it is violence that claims the life of the owner.

We are warned against adultery. Most young men are exterminated by angry husbands because of it. We are warned of the appeasing look of adultery. The woman's lips may be sweet as honey and her kisses smooth as olive oil. But she leaves only bitterness and pain since she walks on the road of death.

We are advised if we cannot restrain ourselves, to marry. Since other women we have not committed to, will take our hard earned money and wealth. No man has to complain women are gold diggers; if you have not given her a ring, accept that sin is expensive and destructive. Sometimes we may became a disgrace and lose our job because of infidelity. They may infect us with venereal diseases, we would die because we had no self control, and our own stupidity sent us to our graves. We should be happy with our wives, and let them surround us with their love.

In business we are warned against guaranteeing others to borrow. We should not be responsible for other people's debts. We should not kill ourselves with anxiety.

We have been advised to avoid excesses like drunkenness and being gluttonous. These lead to poverty. One becomes lazy, all

he does is eat and sleep, soon he is wearing rags and before long he is dead, poverty reduces life expectancy.

We are also advised against excesses like spending all of one's energy and money on women. They have destroyed able bodied men

I could go on and on, but in a nutshell all God's commands protect us in one way or another. In the event of a natural calamity that do not in any way relate to us being unfaithful to God, we can trust He will protect us from the calamity. There was a tragic accident in which a 14 seater Matatu collided head on with a truck on Malaba-Uganda highway. The Matatu was crushed like a child's toy. All except one passenger died. The one who cheated death had no scratches or visible injury. Everybody else in the vehicle was crushed to pulp and mixed with vehicle metals. How would someone explain that? Vehicles collide; you are thrown out of the vehicle, you are some distance from the scene, no scratches, no evidence of the fall!

In 1998, the US embassy in Kenya was bombed. The then American ambassador to Kenya, Ms. Prudence escaped narrowly. I don't know her side of the story, but probably she was just about to enter the building. However, there was a man who was inside. It became dark. He felt a hand touch him, then lead him through the dark. They had a long walk, soon he was outside, he collapsed on the pavement and the man vanished.

When he came to, he had survived the bombing unscathed! All his colleagues died.

Granted we may not expect to survive natural calamities like floods, landslides, tsunamis, earthquakes, lightening and terrorism. But still some people survive by being delayed to avoid the unfortunate place, or be among the survivors - it can never be explained, let's agree God protects them from hidden dangers.

Death is something that is with us and we cannot wish it away. But if we look the way God sees, I am sure He is not worried. If scientists can recreate a dead person using stem cells, that should give us assurance God can resurrect all who died. And why has God created all these planets? We know He creates everything on purpose. We are not sure what they are for, but if your wildest dream is like mine we shall live on these planets you are not wrong. It is not wrong either to expect we shall unite with our dead loved ones and the temporary death that separated us will be a former thing, never worthy to be recalled to mind again.

David was God's servant who witnessed protection from harm and disasters. As a shepherd, God protected him from wild animals. When he ministered to King Saul, God protected him from being pinned on the wall by Saul's spear. At one occasion he had just walked into the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites and he could have been killed had the Philistines

attacked the Israelites. But God protected him from unforeseen danger when the Philistines instead of attacking asked for one man duel from each side.

Having survived a coup by his son Absalom and having been tipped off by his wife Michal that her father King Saul intended to kill him, David could confidently sing; No harm will overtake you; no disaster will come near your tent, for he will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. This is a heritage that all those follow God's principle have; God will protect them from harm and disasters.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

1. Isaiah 48:17, 18; Mark 12:33
2. Leviticus 18:4
3. Exodus 15:26; Romans 3:23
4. Proverbs 1:32; 29:10
5. Proverbs 6:32
6. Proverbs 5:10
7. Proverbs 6:1, 2; 11:15; 17:18; 20:16; 22:26; 27:13
8. Proverbs 23:21
9. Proverbs 31:3
10. Proverbs 2:8.11; 4:6
11. Psalms 91:11; Matthew 4:11; mark 1:13; Hebrews 1:14
12. Luke 13:4; Psalms 20:1

13. Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 65:17; revelation 21:1; John 11:24, 25
14. 1 Samuel 17:17-57; 18:21-28; 19:9-19; 20:33; 2 Samuel 15:14, 15

## Chapter 10
## God will defend you

***"If I were you, I would turn to God and present my case to him. We cannot understand the great things he does and to his miracles there is no end. He sends rain on the land and he waters the fields. Yes, it is God who raises the humble and gives joy to all who mourn. He upsets the plans of the cunning people and traps the wise in their own schemes, so that nothing they do succeeds; even at noon they grope in darkness. But God saves the poor from death; he saves the needy from oppression. He gives***

***hope to the poor and silences the wicked."- Job 5:8-16***

Ziba who David had made him the head servant to Mephibosheth maligned his master. He took with him a couple of donkeys. They carried a load of 200 loaves of bread; a hundred bunches of raisins, fresh fruit and a leather bag full of wine. He took the items to David who was in wilderness after his son Absalom toppled him from the kingdom. When David asked Ziba where his master the son of Jonathan, the grandson of Saul was, he slandered him that he was convinced the Israelites would then restore the kingdom of his grandfather Saul to him. For that reason he remained behind. David was angry and stripped everything that belonged to Mephibosheth and gave it to Ziba.

We may have encountered injustice like that meted on Jonathan's son. People may have defamed you, taken what belongs to you by force or lies or denied you justice. God defends you from such injustice. Job's friend advised him, **'If I were you, I would turn to God and present my case to him. We cannot understand the great things he does and to his miracles there is no end. He sends rain on the land and he waters the fields. Yes, it is God who raises the humble and gives joy to all who mourn. He upsets the plans of the cunning people and traps the wise in their own schemes, so that nothing they do succeeds; even at noon they grope in darkness. But God saves the poor from death; he saves**

**the needy from oppression. He gives hope to the poor and silences the wicked."**

Sure, God raises the humble and gives joy to those who mourn; he fights injustice for his people. Perhaps you would like to know how the account of Jonathan's son ended. When David defeated his son and recaptured the kingdom, he returned to his palace and Mephibosheth cordially welcomed him. He was unkempt; he had not bathed or shaved his beard since David ran away.

By one look David knew that he never celebrated him being overthrown but he was grieving all the time. Nevertheless, he just asked for the sake of asking, "why didn't you come with Ziba?" He told David Ziba betrayed him, he was crippled and Ziba refused to prepare a donkey for him. He continued that if the king was annoyed he could execute him since the entire Saul's family was supposed to be annihilated, what he had done to him already was too much, and his only joy was that the king returned safely. David realised his mistake but it was too late, he had given all Saul's property to Ziba, he changed his wording and said Ziba shares equally with Mephibosheth. Though Jonathan's son lost half of his grandfather's property, God fought the injustice for him. He was vindicated.

Another person who faced injustice was Mordecai. King Xerxes had promoted Haman to be a prime minister. All officials showed their respect to Haman by kneeling. Mordecai refused

since Jews reserved kneeling only to God and not human beings, it was an act of worship. Haman was livid. And when he learnt Mordecai was a Jew he schemed to slay all Jews in the whole of the Persian Empire.

Haman convinced the king that since Jews did not respect the Persian Empire, they were all to be obliterated. The king agreed. Haman decided to hang Mordecai himself. The injustice made the Israelite to turn to God their only redeemer. Tables turned around and it was Haman who was killed instead. All evil he planned, fell squarely on him and his family.

My father faced injustice when Jefu decided to evict him from the land he had purchased without refunding him the purchase consideration. I always hold that if my father had gone on his knees and implored God to vindicate him, things would have been different. Instead he listened to his convivial drinking buddies, who not only misadvised him but conned him of his hard earned money. In the end he lost his life before receiving justice.

To receive justice you have to fight for it and be persistent. Mordecai and the entire Jews fasted and diligently sought Gods face. Ester tactfully approached the king to reverse the decree of wiping out all Jews. Jesus emphasized the need to pray and pray without giving up. He gave an illustration of a judge who never respected man or God. But there was a widow who kept pleading for her rights. She wanted justice against her

opponent. For a long time the judge refused to act, but at last he reasoned with himself and muttered, 'even though I don't fear God or respect people, yet because of all the trouble this window is giving me, I will see to it that she gets her rights. If I don't, she will keep on coming and finally wear me out!'

Granted, sometimes you may not have that time to pray and fast. You opponents may move so swiftly and throw you in prison or some quagmire. If that happens, rest assured God will not forget your previous acts of faith you did show on account of his name. Remember when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown in a furnace heated seven times the usual furnace; it is said the soldiers throwing them in the furnace died of the heat. But the trio came out of the fire alive not smelling smoke. They had no time to fast and pray, but God rewarded them for their previous acts of faith.

We also have Daniel; he was thrown in the lion's pit. God muzzled the mouths of the lions. We are told when Daniel had been rescued and the king decided to give his opponents the same punishment they unjustly gave Daniel, the lions had torn them to pieces before they had hit the ground. Our God is a mighty man of war; he is the God of justice.

I myself have faced injustice; I have narrated of how my relatives wished me to stagnate and never advancing my education just because they wanted to prevent me claiming my dad's share of ancestral land. During my internship in an audit

firm I met a supervisor who mislead me and maligned me to the boss just because he feared I might replace him.

While working with a government agency, my name was substituted in a list of employees qualifying for promotion. My supervisors paid idle employees to lure me into copulation acts so as to destroy my credibility and eligibility for promotion. When they failed, they started hiding and destroying letters that would give me some favour at the workplace. But in all these situations I never lost my peace for I knew God would reward me for acts of faith I had shown on account of his name.

It is my sincere believe God will defend you and fight all injustices meted on you. Just obey his decrees faithfully and you will witness His saving hand.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

1. 2 Samuel 16:2-4
3, 4. 2 Samuel 19:24-30
5, 6. Esther 1:1- 9:32
8. Luke 18:2-7
9, 10. Daniel 1: 7-15; 3:14-28; 6:16-24

## Chapter 11

### God will keep you safe from all hidden dangers

***The lord will make you go through hard times, but he himself will be there to teach you, and you will not have to search for him anymore. If you wonder off the road to the right or the left, you will hear his voice saying,***

***'here is the road, follow it'. – Isaiah 30:20, 21.***

Growing up I did not know my parents were going through a crisis. My father would dissuade me not to mingle with Jefu's children but I could not understand. Other than having children ranging from adults to toddlers, Jefu had 5 kids about my age of six years. I liked to play with all of them childish games. They usually came to our home to seek out for me. I sometimes went to their home but they were never allowed to take me near an isolated hut that had tall grass and a canopy of trees enveloping it. Their parents were generous and ever smiling; they would give me as many oranges and guavas as I could carry. Occasionally they gave me sugarcane, tamarind and paw paws.

The game I liked playing with them was football. Since their father preferred bushes and undergrowth, we played football on an open field of another neighbour's land. We spend a lot of hours playing football especially on weekends and school holidays. Many a times I joined Jefu's kids for lunch. Despite having a big family they never slept hungry. Their farm was huge and fertile. They cultivated maize once a year and this was enough to cater for their annual needs. Most of the land lay furrow, therefore wild fruits thrived. Their entire family members lived clustered in one part of the land as Jefu was reluctant to subdivide the land to allow his married sons to be independent.

All his children were very inquisitive. Any time I would join my playmates for lunch, their elder brothers and sisters would join us. They would interrogate me about our home, my parents, when my father was coming back and the like. But in my childish innocence there was nothing to hide. The goodness was, I was never probing my parents since I trusted them. I knew very little about my parents then.

Among the five children I played football with, three were temporarily mentally challenged. We could be playing football, and then one would stand still as if he was under a trance. You could hit or touch him but he would behave as if he had no feelings or you did not exist. Then suddenly like a hare that had been ambushed by wolfhounds, he would take to his heels as fast as his legs could carry him heading to their home. Another one will start talking alone, gesturing to nonexistent audience then laughing hysterically; he would also show a pair of clean heels following his brother. The other one would fall on ground as if attacked by a bout of epilepsy. He would roll several times then take off like a stone from a catapult to join the other two.

The other two boys remaining would just smile knowingly telling me not to mind their brothers and we would restructure our team and continue playing. I happened to join the other sane boys for lunch one day after the three boys had deserted us. I was surprised to find them quite normal as if nothing had happened. With time I overhead neighbours murmuring that Jefu used the

boys as mediums in the spiritual world to retain and grow his wealth. In a nutshell, the boys were possessed with some spirit.

Occasionally, I could go bathing or swimming with my age mates in a river that passed through their land. The three Jefu's sons would be instructed to mix some ash in waters in front of me, so that when the river flows, the water could wash me. Initially I never suspected what was going on, since it was always normal someone to dig into river bed and rub his hands with sand. But when my mother asked why it was that whenever I bathed with Jefu's kids my skin had rashes. I had no answer but over time I discovered the reason.

When my mother took it upon herself to see I did not mingle with Jefu's kids, I started playing with Khisa's kids. Khisa was my neighbour. He was a reserved man minding his business always. He never meddled into people's affairs unless it was a funeral where he would be extending his hand to condole the bereaved. Khisa was knowledgeable in medicinal herbs and he took pleasure in imparting the knowledge to me. One day, he looked at me laughed and then held me as if he had never seen me.

Then he told me that God loves me. He went ahead and told me Jefu had confessed that he spiked my food with herbs and made me bath some ashes aimed to destroy me. When I showed no sign I would die soon, he instructed his sons to walk me through the bushes so I could possibly be bitten by one of

his snakes but I came out sound. He said it was strange. I looked at Khisa not understanding what he meant. But as I grew up, I came to understand, **"He will keep you safe from all hidden dangers and from all deadly diseases"**. Ever since Jefu's children went out of favour with me. We have never done things like friends again but we remain good neighbours.

One day, with Khisa's and another neighbour, Samson's sons, we stole oranges from another neighbour called Wasilwa. Wasilwa's wife spotted us and he reported the incident to each and every culprit's parent. The other kids unanimously told their parents I was the one who coaxed them to steal. These parents came to report to my mother that I was spoiling their sons. My mother gave me a great spanking.

My father was informed some time when he came home and he beat me thoroughly. My grandmother came to know about it and she lovingly told me words I came later to understand are from the Bible. They are, **"let anyone who has been stealing, steal no more, but work doing something useful with their own hands that they may have something to share with those in need."** She went ahead and planted for me three orange seedlings. This is a verse I remember vividly up to the present time and it is true God was making me go through hard times, for He was there to teach me. He was averting me from wandering off the road to the right or the left, he was saying, **'here is the road, follow it'**.

Another time I wandered off the road was in primary school. My mother had no money to pay for my desk. So a number of students and I sat on the floor. Whenever the teacher was not in class we grew bored. Then we discovered if we turned our heads back we would peep at the underpants of girls sitting on the desk. We enjoyed these and stifled our laughter, throwing paper crafts to each other to disguise our act.

At break time we animatedly discussed this, and then one boy suggested he would carry a mirror the following day so that we could look at the pants discretely without turning our heads and even when the teacher was in class. We all hailed the idea. Things went as planned. Japong, one of the boys brought a piece of broken mirror. As we were discussing our new found occupation at break time, one boy supposed that pregnant women don't wear inner pants. We all got exited and resolved that when our English teach was making books one shall put the mirror under her desk and we would take turns to see if she had a pant on.

After break, the English teacher taught for fifteen minutes then gave an assignment. She sat at her desk in front of the classroom. One of the fastest students had finished her assignment and took it to the teacher for marking. Though we had finished ours, we waited till a crowd had surrounded the teacher to execute our plan.

When more than six pupils had surrounded the teacher, Mukuna got up, as he approached the teacher's desk, he 'accidentally' dropped his pen. While he was picking his pen he dexterously slid the mirror from his book and propped it on the teacher's lower desk railing then gave his book for marking. We got up to go and peer. Unfortunately one of the girls whispered something in the teacher's ear. She stood up kicked the mirror with her leg and stopped marking. She ordered Mukuna to stand in front of the class.

She asked him what the mirror meant; Mukuna did not let the cat out of the bag, he only told her he was not alone doing it. He was asked to name the others. The two other boys were fished out, Japong and I. He asked us to follow her to the head teacher's office. Mukuna and Japong ran away and they never came back to that school again. I was left alone to face the fury of the head teacher. Since I was not the one who had put the mirror under the teacher's desk as the girl testified, and Mukuna and Japong were not there to crucify me, the head teacher was lenient on me. I say lenient since he did not involve my parents. Being a staunch Baptist adherent, he first preached to me, that I should treat older women as mothers and young women as sisters, with all purity. He then gave me seven strokes of the cane. I had to spend a week unable to sit properly on the floor due to sore buttocks as a result of the caning. But over the years I am glad that God chastised me.

I had never attended an agricultural show. When I was in class six and my class mates attended and boasted of how interesting it was. They told me they were allowed to lick sugar at Nzioa Sugar Company and Mumias Sugar Company stands. They showed off that they were able to see the big four and other wild animals. The big four were the lion, the elephant, the buffalo and the rhinoceros. I became envious and said I wished my parents had money. They laughed uncontrollably, with tears in their eyes, they told me they never waited for their parents; they jumped over the fence! The idea was so enticing that I implored them to let me be part of the gang next time. They readily agreed.

We had successfully jumped over the fence, then a watchman spotted us, the other boys melted into the crowds and I was the only one caught. I was repentant, the watchman pitied me, he took me to the stadium to be a ball boy, to return the ball in the field once it went off field. Though it was a punishment I was glad to have watched a live match between AFC leopard football club and Gor Mahia football club. AFC leopard trounced Gor Mahia two goals to nil. As I was going home in my own company, I heard the loudspeakers from a nearby crusade, **"the Lord corrects everyone he loves, and punishes everyone he accepts as his child. Endure what you suffer as being a father's punishment; your suffering shows that God is treating you as his children. Was there ever a child who was not punished by his father?"** The words touched me, I

wiped the tears that had welled in my eyes with the back of my hand and hurried home.

As there weren't many televisions around, the government kept entertaining its people at least twice a month with factual films. There was a vehicle that carried a canvas screen with reels of various action films popular at that time like Rambo, Chuck Norris, Ninja and Bruce lee. Before the film, the government would take ten minutes to advertise its agenda. People normally disliked watching government agenda and would throw rotten eggs until our hosts would cut short the government advert and started the action show. Parents never allowed kids and especially girls to attend the shows as they were held between 6.30 pm and 8.00 pm. Projecting the motion pictures on the canvas screen in an open field was only possible in darkness. Many of my classmates attended and as they discussed the films spiritedly at break time, I always felt as awkward as a cow on ice with the gang. I resolved to sneak and attend one day. My mother found out and punished me severely.

I found out I could not do anything wayward, since God had found me as the apple of his eye, he kept reprimanding and showing me the way. God kept me safe from all hidden dangers which I do not know to date, but the one I know, the buddies I envied never went past basic education. They dropped from school.

People would be always scheming against you. Some may be planning to steal your property, some may be planning your downfall or to deny you that needed promotion, some may be planning to kill you and yet others may be visiting witchdoctors and evil shrines to curse you. Those are some of the hidden dangers you may face.

Job was just going about his business unaware that in the spiritual realm, Satan was trying to harm Him. When God asked Satan if he had seen Job, Satan admitted he had wanted to hurt Job but he was duly protected. In his own words he said, **'Does Job fear God for nothing? Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. ...'**

Most people would not like you. They would consult amongst themselves how to destroy you. They would visit shrines and offer sacrifices to ruin and curse you. But be assured those are hidden dangers God will protect you from. **'Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest'**- NIV.

Balak hired Balaam to curse the Israelites. The Israelites had God's favour and he was worried they were posing a great threat to him. The Israelites did not know of this hidden danger. God protected them by directing Balaam to bless them instead. May what happened to Israelites happen to you. Where they are

gathered around a shrine to curse you, may God bless you instead! God will protect you from all hidden dangers as long as you shelter under his wing.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

1. Psalms 91:3
10. Isaiah 30:20, 21
15. Timothy 5:1, 2; Job 5:17
17. Hebrews 12:6, 7
21. Job 1:7-10
22. Proverbs 26:2
23. Numbers 22:2-41; 24:10

## Chapter 12
## God will protect and heal you from deadly diseases

***"And there were many people suffering from a dreaded skin disease who lived in Israel during the time of the prophet Elisha; yet not one of them was healed, but only Naaman the Syrian" Luke 4:27***

In psalms 41:3 we read that, **'the Lord will help them when they are sick and will restore them to health.'** Evidently the verse shows this is a select people and not everybody. For God to restore your health and heal your sickness, it must be a reward for acknowledging Him.

King Hezekiah fell sick and Isaiah told him that he should put everything in order for he was going to die. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed, **'Remember, Lord, that I have served you faithfully and loyally, and that I have always tried to do what you wanted me to'**. The account continues that as Isaiah was leaving the king alone, God told him to go back and tell him that He had heard his prayer and seen his tears. He promised him not only to heal him but rescue Jerusalem from Assyria and defend the city.

Notice that Hezekiah refused to accept his eventuality because he knew there was always a reward for worshiping God and obeying his commands. It is a lesson to us to have so much

conviction in our God such that we refuse to accept those who condemn us. If the doctor says you will die, refuse to accept. If the medical report is bleak, believe God can turn things around. Also look at how he took his petition to God, he faced the wall and prayed. He humbly and freely faced God. 'God though I will die, but I feel it is unfair, look at what I have done, how I tried', he might have said. Hezekiah uses the word I tried meaning he never entirely succeeded in doing good all the time, but the little acts of showing faith in God were enough to qualify him for a reward despite his failings.

The most interesting account is that of Naaman. Elisha did not meet him to pray over his sickness. He just sent a message that he washes seven times in river Jordan. Naaman was enraged that Elisha did not meet him to pray for his sickness and contended that Abana and Pharpar were far better rivers than Jordan. He would have just got back to Damascus and washed in them. But one of his wise servants recalled him to mind and said that what Elisha had asked of him was so simple, what if he had asked for something hard, he would have done it anyway! He went and dipped himself in river Jordan seven times and he was completely cured. His flesh became firm and healthy, like that of a child.

The favour of God was on Naaman. It is written he won the wars for Assyria since God helped him. Another thing that shows Naaman was God fearing was his humbleness. Despite winning many wars he was not proud. He listened to his maid servant.

And even after knowing he could go to Israel and be cured, he did not go secretly; he asked permission from his king. He listened to his servant and dipped himself seven times in river Jordan. God rewarded him for his acts of faith. Jesus was later to refer to him as the favoured one since there were many people suffering from a dreaded skin disease who lived in Israel during the time of the prophet Elisha; yet not one of them was healed, but only Naaman the Syrian

There was this woman who had suffered severe bleeding for twelve years and it is written she spent everything she had on doctors but they could not cure her. Notice the woman was very resilient, she knew she could be cured, that is why she spent everything. Then she reasoned that if only she could touch the hem of Jesus dress, she could be cured. She did it and she was rewarded abundantly. Jesus called her his daughter and remarked that her faith had made her well.

We are told of a pool with five porches known as Bethzatha. An angel stirred the pool and whoever was first to jump in was healed of any ailment. There was a man who had waited for 38 years, no one could put him in the pool and others were too fast for him in jumping into the pool. Jesus told him to stand up take his bed and walk. He believed it and he was healed. Jesus saw his persistence, after 38 years with zero possibility he would jump into the pool, he did not give up that he would be healed, and that act of faith, made him rewarded with sound health.

I will now talk of my mother's account. After our father left, she was assailed from all directions with life's challenges. She had to educate all her four kids, two were to be in college and two were in high school. Vicky was putting pressure on her that she should be given a share of land. Jefu had filed a case in court to evict her from the land her husband had purchased. My father's brother was also putting pressure on her to give Vicky land and his kids wanted the ancestral land subdivided excluding mother as an heiress.

These problems bogged her down and she got a persistent type of asthma that threw her into convulsion if ever she received bad news. We had to learn how to inject her with adrenaline shots to boost her breathing during attacks. She was also to take daily some medicine called Phranol in my country. She was to use an asthma inhaler if she suspected an attack. But the attacks were so sudden that she never used the inhaler and we were to inject the adrenaline shots.

Another problem that arose was all of us would need to go away from home, either in college or high school, what happens if she gets an attack then? Luckily this was solved when a nurse showed her how to inject herself. The medicines were to be within reach and she had to move fast, any mistake would be fatal. We thank God she is a very hard working woman and she avoided the mistakes.

But over time the medicine became costly. But I realised her attacks increased when she was under stress. So I studied the Bible with her and encouraged her. As her faith increased the attacks became far apart at times it would take a year for her to experience any. And when God at his own time solved our problems and she became a soldier of God's word, the attacks stopped!

I will now talk about myself. In 2017 I was diagnosed to be diabetic. It was a shock. My sugars averaged 27 Mmol, I lost my hair, I became blind and deaf, I could talk but people later told me I was not producing any sound. I was injected regularly with insulin till my sugars dropped to 14 Mmol. Slowly my eyesight returned and I became partially deaf. I was to use some tablets every after any meal for the rest of my life and doctors discontinued administering insulin.

Diabetes is not covered by the national insurance in my country; I was to spend on the disease on my own. My workplace and my village were such places that are a beehive of gossip. Soon a lot of people were bombarding me with herbal medicines claiming they would heal the disease completely. I acquired a blood meter, lancets and blood test stripes. I discontinued my medicine and tried the herbal drugs, my blood sugars rose to an average of 17 mmol, I discarded the herbal and reverted back to the prescribed medicine and the sugars dropped to 14 Mmol.

Now doctors were scanty with information and I realised they charged for the disease differentially. If a person came from opulent estates, he was charged highly and if a person came from less endowed estates he was charged a fair amount. So I endeavoured to study thoroughly about my disease to know it.
I discovered there are majorly two types of diabetes. Type 1 and type 2. Type 2 occurs when the pancreas does not make enough insulin or one's body cells don't respond to insulin. Before one is type 2, one is pre-diabetic. Here the blood sugar is so high but he cannot be diagnosed as type2.

Type 1 diabetes is where the pancreas does not produce any insulin. The reason may range to the pancreas being injured or autoimmune disease which destroys insulin producing cells.

Type1 attacks mainly children and young adults though it may attack any age. One has to depend on insulin injection. Type 2 mainly attacks adults, can be controlled with food, medicine or insulin.

It was interesting to find out we also have Gestational diabetes, type 3c diabetes, Latent Autoimmune Diabetes in Adults(LADA) , Maturity-Onset Diabetes of the Young(MODY), Neonatal diabetes and Brittle diabetes

Gestational diabetes occurs in pregnant women and goes away after birth, but one is at risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in one's life. Type 3c occurs when the pancreas is damaged by

pancreatitis, pancreatic cancer, cystic fibrosis and hemochromatosis. LADA results from an autoimmune reaction just like type 1 but develops slower than type1, occurs in people over 30 years. MODY results from genetic mutation and there are over 10 types, it is inherited. Neonatal diabetes it is transient diabetes mellitus, it occurs within 6 months of life and disappears and it may attack again later in life. Brittle diabetes is a type 1 marked with frequent high and low blood sugar levels, requires pancreas transplant in rare cases.

I concluded I was type 2 from the information. I terminated using drugs. What I did was to take my blood sugar before any meal, then after one hour post meal, I would take the reading again. I entered all my readings on an excel spreadsheet. For one week the reading averaged 16 Mmol. As I continued learning on this disease, I discovered there is a lot of sugar is in my blood stream since more sugar is released in my blood stream than the available insulin can regulate. How could I reduce the amount of sugar released in the blood? That is a question I needed to answer when I stumbled on KETO diet.

KETO in full is ketogenic diet. This is a diet of fats and proteins only. Carbohydrates are just compound sugars which are broken down by enzymes to glucose - blood sugar. Therefore if my diet had no carbohydrates, no sugar would be released in the blood stream. Carbohydrates provide energy to the body so do fats. My body will be forced to break down fats for energy. That was my breakthrough!

I took the reading before meal and it was 13.7 Mmol. Two hours after my KETO diet it was 4.1 Mmol! Tears of joy welled in my eyes. I went on my knees and thanked God. I believed it is true the way the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shinning brighter and brighter until midday. For the whole week my blood sugar before and after meals ranged between 5 - 3.5 Mmol, but I felt weak. I decided to add some carbohydrates in my diet.

I learnt that complex carbohydrates are digested slowly therefore, sugar is not released into bloodstream quickly. I also learned that foods with a lot of fibre inhibited sugar release in the blood. I came to learn there is soluble and non soluble fibre. Soluble fibre was the best since it greatly limited the sugar that can be absorbed in blood. Soluble fibre is found in vegetables that are slimy like okra, Jewish Malloy and Chia seeds. Jewish Malloy was so cheap and plenty in my area that I was happy to reduce my food bill since foods branded 'diabetic friendly' were so expensive!

Complex carbohydrates comprised of all vegetables except peeled Irish potatoes. Whole meal grains were also complex carbohydrates, though they have high sugar than vegetables and fruits. I decided to add vegetables and selected fruits to my KETO. The blood range reading remained 5-3.5 Mmol. Saying I was happy was an understatement, I cannot describe my feeling. My eyesight ceased to blurry, my hearing improved, I

could talk comfortably. I took a leap of faith to add more carbohydrates in the next week.

I added whole meal flours ranging from, wheat, maize, sorghum and millet. That week my average sugar was 6.5 Mmol with one high of 9.0 Mmol. I debated if I should do away with other carbohydrates and only use vegetables. Then I learned about intermittent fasting. I also learned about food labels. For instance a label like the one shown below could appear on food stuff. Total carbohydrates of 55g include total sugars of 1.2g. Therefore if my target was to eat 25g of carbohydrates per day, it is safe to eat the whole package of the Pringles below since the serving of 25g contains only 14g of total carbohydrates. However the total carbohydrates per 100g could be reduced by the amount of fibre as 55g-3g so we end with 52g of carbohydrates. But I found this is not a good idea, using gross carbohydrate was the best thing to do.

## 25g Pringles Food Label

| NUTRITIONAL FACTS | |
|---|---|
| Serving Per Container | |
| Serving Size 25g | amount per 100g |
| Calories | 540 |
| | |
| Total Fat(G) | 33g |
| Saturated Fat | 3.1g |
| Trans Fat | 0.2g |
| Cholesterol | 0mg |
| Sodium | 440mg |
| Total Carbohydrates | 55g |
| Dietary Fiber | 3.0g |
| Total ,Sugars | 1.2g |
| Includes Added Sugars | 0g |
| Proteins | 4.3g |

My argument here is, I found out I could eat anything if only I took into consideration the carbohydrates count. I could also

keep the sugars stable by using intermittent fasting. These meant I could not have any meal between breakfast and lunch, and also lunch and supper and if for any reason my blood sugar was above 7mmol before lunch, I skipped the lunch. That ensured I maintained a random blood sugar of between 6 – 3 Mmol.

Not everybody who has faith in God would be healed like my mother and I. Sometimes God allows sickness to persist so he may show his power in our weakness. When you have done all you can to please God but still you are not healed, rest in peace that God still loves you. He may use that sickness to benefit you, to encourage someone or prevent you from straying from the way of light. That is exactly what happened to Paul; let me quote the self explanatory verse. **"But to keep me from being puffed up with pride because of many wonderful things I saw, I was given a painful physical ailment, which acts as Satan's messenger to beat me and keep me from being proud"- 2 Corinthians 12:7.**

We need not to give up on God, can we continue worshiping him with 12 years of ailment, and can we do so with 38 years of ailment? We have a biblical account of those who did, never gave up and were healed, remember other than our bodies being weak and getting sick from time to time, Satan makes us sick. Job was sent illness by Satan to break his resolve to worship God, after he had endured faithfully, God restored him in full. If we continue being faithful be sure God will reward us

and heal our sickness, he has promised, “he will keep you safe from all hidden dangers and from all deadly diseases”- Psalms 91:3

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

2, 3. 2 kings 20:2-9

4,5 2 Kings 5:2-14

6. Matthew 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43

7. John 5:7-9

## Chapter 13
## God sends angels to reward you

***Remember to welcome strangers in your homes. There were some who did that and welcomed angels without knowing it - Hebrews 13:2.***

Moses had a dream of delivering his people from slavery in Egypt. He killed an Egyptian who was contenting with an Israel. When he found Israelites fighting and he thought he could unite them as brothers, one questioned his authority by asking if he wanted to eradicate him the way he killed the Egyptian. The Israelites were not ready to be delivered. He fled. God could have chosen anybody else to deliver the Israelites. But he looked at the noble dream Moses had and he arranged for him to meet Jethro who would prepare him for many years to qualify executing his dream. Jethro was a priest and he fitted the bill of preparing Moses for the divine deliverance.

At one time Moses was overwhelmed solving the problems of the Israelites; God sent Jethro to show him how to delegate responsibility. God also sent Aaron and Miriam to help him. God is interested in rewarding you and he will provide all people and resources necessary to help you achieve your dream.

Joseph dreamt of being a leader over his brothers and parents. God used his brothers who sold him as a slave and he was taken to Egypt. God used Potiphar's wife who ensured he was thrown in the prison. It is in the prison that he interpreted Pharaoh's dream. Pharaoh then used all his resources to fulfil Joseph's dream.

Another person that was given a dream and even anointed to be king was David. God prepared David giving him whatever he needed to be king. He was the first one to eat the show bread only eaten by priests with no consequences. God gave him followers to ensure he was protected as he ran away from Saul. God gave him a very wise woman Abigail to ensure he was emotionally stable. He is the king that is said to be after God's own heart. Imagine if Saul had not made David to be a fugitive, would he have survived the coup carried out by Absalom? Probably not, God prepared him for hardship and he sailed through the coup naturally.

Nehemiah had a dream of rebuilding the Israel wall while in captivity in Persia. God fulfilled his dream by arranging the king of Persia to ask him what was on his mind. He then gave Nehemiah authority letters to travel. In addition he gave him horsemen and supplied timber to him. Despite opposition God provided Nehemiah with the necessary resources and people to pursue his dream.

Paul had a dream of serving God whole heartedly. He persecuted the early Christians to follow this dream. God saw his heart and arranged for persons to give him the right resources to accomplish his dream. He made tremendous gains in spreading the gospel to the gentiles.

I had finished high school and my jealousy relatives had ensured I stagnated and I even missed a chance to join university. My dad's drinking buddies who I thought could give me some break-through from my quandary were not forthcoming. They could not give me even simple manual jobs. Some told me in off cut manner to go to university when they knew I had no funds and the chance had already been given to someone else. Everybody was not ready to touch me with an eighty foot pole.

But God had prepared people to help me fulfil my goal. It took a mechanic to recall me to my mind that I needed no human help but God's favour. The mechanic told me he had lost his parents at a tender age. His father's brother took their property. He discontinued him from going to school. He ran away and was lucky to stumble into a missionary that educated him. His uncle did not care whether he was alive or dead. Nobody sought for him. He passed every exam he undertook and was given scholarships till he finished learning a degree in mechanical engineering.

He sought for a job to no avail. Then he established a garage with only essential tools. Luckily on the day he opened the garage, he met his classmate who was employed by the government. He gave him a government tender to service their vehicles for one year. He also paid him in advance for three months. That was a shot in the arm, he bought all tools he needed and his business picked up. He gave me a book by Norman Vincent Pearle, The Power of Positive Thinking. He told me to go home put our house in order, encourage my mother who may at that time be under depression. He added I should read the book, think only of joining college, pray and God will show me a way.

The rest is history. We stumbled on the existence of a public trustee. We visited their offices and I obtained some money to further my education. My mother who was the presumptive custodian of the trust withdrew some funds. A war erupted. While I prepared to join college, two of my cousin, met and planned to stop me. One quickly enrolled for adult education programme and convinced my mother that he was short of funds, due to unforeseen circumstances. He borrowed my school fees with the promise to repay twice the amount in three months time, coinciding with the time I was expected commence college. His brother who lived in the vicinity of the college convinced mother he was going to pay my first semester school fees and I would stay in his house and commute from there to college.

I went to stay with him. The borrower never repaid the money; he always had a litany of excuses. My cousin never paid the school fees. While mother thought I was in college my cousin was quite comfortable I was mark timing. After six, months when he thought I had lost my chance at the college, he accused me wrongly and chased me away. We became wiser. I joined the college. From that time we requested the trustee to only write cheques in favour of the college since withdrawing money attracted conmen.

While at college I used to attend piano lessons in a nearby theatre. When I had become quasi expert, one of my lecturers joined for the lessons. Our instructor had not reported that day so I voluntarily showed my tutor the basics of the Piano and he was grateful.

After three years I was done with college and I was a trainee accountant in one of the audit firms. Then a high school classmate who had joined a polytechnic paid a visit on me and requested to borrow my college notes. I gave him all the notes freely.

After two years this classmate I gave notes called me and asked if I could wish to be a part time lecturer in a college that needed a support lecturer urgently. I grabbed the chance, took it. I had taught in that college for two years when I was invited for job interview I had applied with the ministry of local government. It was rumoured that those who attended the interviews of the

ministry could only get the job if they were connected and paid bribes. Attending the interviews was just a formality since the position would have been filled already. I decided not to listen to this negative hearsay. I attended the interview. One of the panellist was the lecturer I had taught how to play piano. I got the job!

I look back and agree with Paul, **"Remember to welcome strangers in your homes. There were some who did that and welcomed angels without knowing it"**. By giving my classmate (who we had never been close in high school) notes I was entertaining an angel. By teaching my tutor piano I was entertaining an angel. These were people sent by God to help me fulfil my dream.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

1. Exodus 2:12-14
2. Exodus 18:14-27
3. Genesis 37:3- 46:31
4 1 Samuel 16:13- 2 Samuel 22:51
5. Nehemiah 1:1- 13:31
6. Acts 7:58-9:5
15. Hebrews 13:2

## Chapter 14
## Continue living by God's principles to continue tapping His rewards

***When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time - Luke 4:13***

For God to continue providing, protecting and defending you, keeping you safe from all hidden dangers and all deadly diseases, it implies He is contending with your enemies. When enemies try to snatch up or thwart your efforts in getting God's reward and they fail, they don't give up. They hibernate somewhere and constantly poke their noses into your affairs. Whenever they perceive you are weak, they attack again. David agrees that his enemies attacked him when he was at his weakest; the good news is God will continue protecting and defending you because you remained in faith.

After baptism, Jesus was lead by the spirit into the wilderness. He fasted for forty days. Satan came to tempt him. Jesus invoked Isaiah 54:17, **"but no weapon will be able to hurt you; you will have an answer for all who accuse you..."** Jesus dismantled Satan's enticements with scriptures since he had an answer to the accuser. God saw his faithfulness, he sent

angels to minister to him. Satan left him, but he was not done yet, he was waiting for an opportune time.

The enemy will always be testing your strength. You can recall when Moses went to Egypt and told Pharaoh to let the Israelites go and worship their God, the first thing pharaoh did was to test the strength of God or what he perceived as his enemy; someone who wanted to take his free casual labourers. Moses dropped his stick and it turned into a snake. Pharaoh was not convinced that God is that strong, he called his magicians and they dropped their sticks which became snakes. Pharaoh might have reasoned, if my magicians can do what he did, my enemy is not strong, he resolved he would not let the Israelites go. Despite Moses' snake turning and swallowing all the magicians' snakes to indirectly tell pharaoh who was stronger, he remained obstinate, and he wanted another sign.

Moses performed two more miracles, turning water into blood and covering the whole land with frogs. When the magicians were able to do the same, Pharaoh refused to release the Israelites. What he did not ask himself was why his magicians could not stop the plagues that it required Moses to pray for him to avert the plagues. Moses performed six more miracles which the magicians were unable to replicate and they told Pharaoh the miracles were from God.

The miracles nearly softened pharaoh's heart as he almost let the Israelites go but as soon as Moses prayed and the plagues

were over, he declined. Perhaps he may have reasoned, since Moses must let me know before he sends a plague, the only thing I can do is to never let him appear in my presence. After the ten plagues, pharaoh saw the only way to stop the plagues was banning Moses at his palace. He threatened him never to materialize at the palace or he would breathe his last.

Moses obeyed and the first sons of Egyptians were put to death. This completely softened all the Egyptians that they had the urgency of expunging the Israelites from their land even giving them gifts generously. The Israelites left. But the enemy thought perhaps they had expended all the power they had, and they were uselessly stuck at the shores of red sea. They were to be brought back. God who had fought for them and delivered them from Egypt, would he battle for them?

God made a way through the sea and they walked on dry land crossing the sea. The enemy would have seen the sea parting, marvel at the miracle and leave the Israelites alone. But naturally the enemy is so intent at seeing you stagnate in one place, destroying or unjustly denying you what belongs to you that he is oblivious of the danger he is exposed to. For instance when Joseph's jealous brothers told Jacob, he had been devoured by some wild animal, Jacob could have died of heart attack. They would have fought over his wealth and Israel would not have been a blessed nation. But to keep his promise to Abraham, God held Jacob together.

God's reward for the Israelites was due to their faithful forefathers. He drowned the entire Egyptian army. Change is the only constant factor. The Israelites had been in Egypt as slaves. Things had changed, they were then free. In Egypt they were overworked and their population increase checked. They then were free with no restrictions. They had no time to worship God in Egypt; they had all the time then. Would they remain faithful; would God continue rewarding them?

The book of kings and the chronicles has fascinating narratives of persons who saw the mighty saving hand of God as long as they obeyed him. It also shows the anguish of those who disobeyed God went through. As God rewarded those who acknowledged him that they lived effortlessly, those who rebelled lived in wretchedness. It was like if you obey the law, you were oiling your moving parts so you move smoothly, and disobeying was like leaving your moving parts to rust so you contend with friction.

God Himself has promised that those who come to Him **must** believe he rewards those who seek Him. **The relationship with God is a quid pro quo relationship**. This is largely because just obeying his laws brings insurmountable rewards.

In our struggle with Jefu, as I had said earlier, in the world we live in, change is the only constant, things changed. He lost his stock. His main source of income vanished as Nzioa Sugar was mismanaged and it was unable to pay cane farmers timely. His

children clamoured for his land to be subdivided. He had failed to educated even one child past Secondary level.

He became repentant, he subdivided the land to his children but he had no money to pay the land surveyors, he requested my mother to pay them, then he would sign consent forms for her to get the title deed for the potion dad bought. Mother refused since it was difficult to trust Jefu. Our relationship had been battered for 27 years ever since he first wanted to evict us. I told mother there was no harm giving him the money given that he had not included the piece father bought in his subdivision. We gave him the money and to our utmost surprise, he signed the consent forms! We got the title deed. Having such powerful witness that God defended us; shall we doubt he will continue rewarding us if we remain in the faith?

**How we can continue living by God's principles**

1. God is love, God is just, and God has all wisdom and power. He is merciful, kind, forgiving, generous and patient. By **emulating Him** we would be living by his principles. Deuteronomy 32:4; Job 12;13; Isaiah 40:26; 1 John 4:8; Ephesians 5:1,2

2. We **must worship God alone** as He does not share his glory with anyone or anything else. Exodus 20:4, 5; Psalms 115:4-8; Isaiah 42:8

3. **Keep learning about God** by studying the Bible. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17

4. **Avoid sinful desires and practises** which include spiritism/magical spells, sexual immorality, lying, gambling, stealing, fits of anger, violence and drunkenness. Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Acts 19:18,19; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10; 15:33; Titus 1:2; proverbs 6:16-19; Colossians 3:9,10; Ephesians 5:3-5; Exodus 20: 15; Ephesians 4:28; Genesis 4:5-8; Psalms 11:5; Proverbs 22:24,25; 24:29; Romans 12:17-21; Deuteronomy 18:9-13; Proverbs 18:10; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 1 Timothy 3:8; Proverbs 23:20,21, 29-35

5. **Pray to God every day**. Pray about anything that might shape your relationship with God. Ask for material things you need. Plead for your sins to be forgiven. Ask for help to resist temptations. Pray for others. Thank and praise God. Pray for God to help you in your problems. Pray before meals. Pray on every occasion. Psalms 65:2; Thessalonians 5:17; Philippians 4:6,7; Matthew 6:9-13; 1 Chronicles 29:10-13; Psalms 55:22; 120:1; Matthew 14:19; Ephesians 6:18

6. **Take care of your family**. Love your wife. Love and respect your husband. Teach and correct children. Stay committed to each other. Ephesians 5:22-31; Colossians 3:19; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 Timothy 5:8; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Ephesians 6:4

7. Avoid adultery and **be faithful to one's mate**. Hebrews 13:4; Matthew 19:6-9; Romans 7:2, 3; Malachi 2:14-16

8. **Be clean physically, mentally and spiritually**. Keep your compound and house clean. God is clean and holy. Obey all rules and regulations in your country on waste disposal. 1 peter 1:16

9. **Meditate on God's promise and ask him what you want**. The following are lines of Meditation you can follow.

My father Jehovah, you said you are the owner of gold and silver and you liberally give it to your servants.

Oh Lord you said your servant will lend generously and never borrow. Please free me from debt. Show me my bottle of little oil that you will miraculously multiply so that I can sell and pay of my creditors.

Give me the wisdom you gave Joseph to keep aside grain during the period of abundance that in the periods of famine, I may lack nothing.

Give me the wisdom and the blessing of an ant to work hard and store up resources for a rainy day.

Protect me from immoral women and men who may distract me and consume all the money I have worked hard to earn. Remind

me always I am a king and I should not spend all my energy on sex and all my money on women/men.

Protect me from greediness and drunkenness and poverty. As a king never let me crave for alcohol, let me not ignore your law, take away my poverty and my unhappiness. I cast these burdens unto you.

Make me strong and industrious. Let me know the value of everything; make me never to worry about the future.

Give me a barn full of wealth that I may donate willingly to those who don't have. Make me use my talents to the full to earn this income that will sustain the needs of my family, give charitably to those who do not have and leave an inheritance to my children and thousands of my generations.

Show care as you promised to send rain, make the earth fertile, fill streams with water and provide earth with crops. Bless all I do.

You have indeed heard me; you have listened to my prayer. I praise you God, because you did not reject my prayer or keep back your constant love from me.

My father God, your word says that money is the answer to everything. I want to meet all my basic needs and have some luxury since you showed the example by resting on the seventh day and taking pleasure in the work of your hands. I also want to

have enough to give for charitable work. Please send me this money.

Oh God, you advised us that if we find honey let's just eat enough to our satisfaction but not gorge everything till we burst dead. As you send these lots of money my way let me not forget you and love the money, let me see the money like any equipment like a knife. If a knife is handled well, it is useful otherwise it is a murderous instrument. Let me put money to good use without loving it, let me love you forever.

Help me gather my money and make it grow, do not make me party to looters and obtain dishonest money, which will dwindle away and make me poor.

Give me wisdom to handle money and increase it. You yourself have declared wealth has its dynamics and cannot be handled by everybody, you have asked, "why should fools have money in hand to buy wisdom. When they are not able to understand it?"

Make me stay humble even as I get rich and let me not put my hope in wealth, my hope should remain in you because you richly provide me with everything for my enjoyment.

Give me no lazy hands to make poverty but give me diligent hands that bring wealth.

Let me always plan and spend my money carefully since by gathering the leftovers of fish and bread multiplied by Jesus

miraculously, God you set a standard to us not to be wasteful. Like a person who wants to build a tower sitting down and estimating the cost, let me plan carefully.

Oh God, open the heavens, the storehouses of your bounty, send rain on the land in season and bless the work of my hands. Let me lend to others but borrow from none according to your word.

Help me to be wise and live in wealth and luxury, let me not be stupid to spend my money as fast as I get it.

Give me the power to be rich because it is your promise and a covenant you made to my ancestors and since you said, you remain faithful always, give me the power.

My father God, I know hard work can never make me rich. It is your blessing that makes me wealthy. Bless me with riches.

Make me wise and reward me with wealth according to your promise.

Let the evil pronounced by my enemies on me to live in pain and poverty be defeated in name of JESUS CHRIST. Like Jabez who was called pain, reduce to nothing my curses and bless me instead. Jabez prayed to you to bless him, give him much land, and keep him from anything evil that might cause him pain and you gave him his request. I humbly request you to make me wealthy and add no pain to it.

Help me to read your word in my worship. Help me to study it day and night. Make me obey everything and as you promised Joshua to be prosperous and successful, make me prosperous and successful.

According to your word, give me the gift of enjoying the wealth and the property you have given me. Let me remain grateful and praise you.

My father God, you have promised us you have riches and honour to give, prosperity and success. Please give me riches and honour, prosperity and success.

My God, you have said that all things on earth belong to you; I humbly request to have gold and silver.

**Further Reading; Bible verses quoted directly or indirectly per paragraph**

1. Psalms 10:2; 18:17; 82:3, 4
2. Matthew 4:1-11

3-8 Exodus 3:1-14:31

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Bible quotations are from The Good News Bible (1976)

Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| NIV | New International Version Bible |
| KJV | King James Version Bible |
| ASV | American Standard Version Bible |
| USD | United states of America Dollar |

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