A Christian
and
Giving

Fredrick G. Omondi

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

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INTRODUCTION

Giving is something that many of us find ourselves doing now and then but what many of us have not realized is the fact that we need to be in the know when doing it and with the right perspective otherwise it might be in vain on our part. This book has come in print to assist the reader to be in the know in this important subject and not to continue giving because people are doing it, but to be able to do it right so that his or her action in that direction be of use to him or her. As you read you will find it to be interesting and as you finish reading you will come out with understanding and that is what counts most in our actions on a daily basis and one will come out with no regret whatsoever (Ecclesiastes 8:5, 7:11-12).

In this book and in all my other books, I have endeavored to restrict myself in King James version of the Holy Bible in quotations and the subsequent texts, as it is the best ever translation in English and in case you ar uncomfortable with of don't despair, as all is well and not lost. Whenever you find I have given a scripture quotation, just go to your Bible (whatever version it is) and read and you will be in the same page with me in your reading.

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Chapter 1

God and Giving

Let me say from the onset on the issue of giving that the first giver was God Himself and who is not only a giver but a big and perpetual giver and gives virtually every thing to each living thing both in heaven and on earth (Acts 17:24-25, 1 Corinthians 4:6-7)

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

Acts 17:24-25

And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to A-pol'-los for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.
For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

1 Corinthians 4:6-7

Yes, everything we have received God has given us, life, breath food, shelter, clothes, ministry, etc.

Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.
Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Psalm 37:3-4

Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding.
He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

Isaiah 40:28-29

If we trust in the Lord God, he will feed us and when we also delight in him, he gives us the desires of our hearts, and you know what, God does not faint or get weary at any time. If he did many would have lacked as he is our giver.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;
Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

John 14:15-17

Here in the above scripture the Lord Jesus Christ was talking to his disciples (those who had believed in him and were now following him) about the coming of the Holy Spirit to dwell in them and that his Father God was the one who was going to give them; when he will have ascended back to heaven to his Father, and that the Holy Spirit will take his place and comfort them.

Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:
For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.
Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?
Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Matthew 7:7-11

God is ready to give his children what they ask for, only make sure you are one of his children.

The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

Psalm 29:11

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 14:27

The Lord Jesus Christ gave his disciples an assurance of peace at a time when they needed it most, when he was going to leave them in due course to be crucified and later after his resurrection, he would later leave them and ascend back to heaven. At the time he was talking to them, they were a worried lot (John 14:1-3, 18-20).

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

I and my Farther are one.

John 10:27-30

Here still the Lord is talking to his disciples.

For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

Psalm 84:11-12

If you want to be shielded by the Lord, walk uprightly. You are blessed if you trust in the Lord. (Psalm 32:1-2, Romans 4:1-8).

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

James 1:5

Even wisdom God will give those who lack as he is the source of all truth wisdom.

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.
Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.
I new heart also will I give you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 36:24-26

The Lord God in the above scripture was talking to the Israelites that he would restore them back to their land from the countries they were scattered because of their sins and also that he will restore their spirituality. The same God is talking to the people in the world to come out from wherever they are (in sin) and to surrender to him and he will cleanse them with the blood of his Lamb (Jesus Christ) by sprinkling just as it happened by the priests of old (Leviticus 4) though now it is better because it is no longer the blood of animals sacrificed but Christ himself (Hebrews 7:11-22, John 1:29). But one must surrender to the

Lordship of Jesus Christ to be cleansed and given a new heart and the person of the Holy Spirit.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?
He that spaced not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Romans 8:31-32

Are you for God (on God's side)? Because God did not withhold his own Son Jesus Christ but gave him out to all of us (mankind) so that we believe in him for our salvation (which is free as he had paid for our sins at the cross) and that also we get other things freely through him. Only those who are saved are on God's side for God, Yes, I must talk because that is the plain truth (1 Timothy 1:15-16).
From the scriptures you have read in this chapter you have seen that God is a giver, a real giver, a big giver and he ever gives to all his creations whatever is necessary for their livelihood. God is blessed forever. (2 Corinthians 11:31).

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

2 Corinthians 11:31

God who is righteous (All righteous) likes / loves giving and encourages us to do the same as we are His children. (Acts 20:33-35).

I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.
Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.
I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to **remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.**

Acts 20:33-35

In the above scripture you can see that apostle Paul was giving out to the needy as he was obeying the commandment of the Lord. From the scripture we are able to see that giving can be equated to blessing. Now what many have not realized is that the act of giving is an act of righteousness. If you are not giving then you have an unrighteousness in you, especially if you profess Christianity (say you are a Christian). A Christian has to act like his Father otherwise is not blessed but cursed (Malachi

3:8-12). Lack of giving on the part of a Christian is unrighteousness (sin) because God ever gives to all even the sinner (who is ignorant and may not give out to others or to God) but you a Christian; you have knowledge of the word of God (is enlightened) and therefore cannot fail to give back to God in addition to other fellow human beings and so on, as the love of God also is in you, which you need to show out in action and not in word only (1 John 3:16-18).

Now when I said that God is blessed forever (2 Corinthians 11:13) I did not mean that is so because he is a giver but because he is Himself is the one blessing and the source of all things and lacks nothing, virtually nothing.

The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

Psalm 24:1

I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds:

For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof.

Psalm 50:9-12

God owns everything and is able to give us all that we need in life. He is super rich and wealthy as well (Haggai 2:8). Let us look at this scripture and see how God esteems giving.

THERE was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band.

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

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

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

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

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

Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter, he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Acts 10:1-6, 32-35

In the above scripture we do find a man who feared God together with all his household and not only prayed always to God but gave much alms to people. We find that God was all along noticing his generosity to people by giving much alms (donations) and God took the trouble to send an angel to him to acknowledge his kind acts and to instruct

him what he need to do for his good. Now when Simon Peter finally enters Cornelius' house, he pours out the truth on giving; that it too was a righteous act just like praying to God and for that matter God recognized it and accepted him. because God the Creator of heaven and earth is a righteous God and loves righteous deeds from us and will accept all that fear him and do righteousness without any discrimination. So, it is wise to live righteously before God. From that we need to do the same to others giving a hand wherever it is needed in one way or the other – it can be money or material; in helping our fellow beings.

Chapter 2

The driving factor in Giving

In the last chapter we just found out that God the Creator of heaven and earth is a real Giver. Now in this chapter we are going to find out in a short while why he is a giver and generally what makes one to be a giver, what is the motivating factor in the act of giving?

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

John 3:16

That's it. God loved the world. He not only loved but loved it so much that he gave his only begotten Son, that you and mine have just to believe in him, and everlasting life is yours and mine. So, the main factor in giving is love. It is love, the love of God, which is true love, that can drive you and me to give. If God the Father is a giver, then like Father like Son, Jesus Christ his Son is also a giver for he gave his own life for you and me and allowed himself to be crucified on the cross for our sakes. Giving is a matter of emptying oneself for the others. You and me to be real

good givers, we need Jesus Christ the Savior of the world, very, very much.

If we have Jesus, we take also his nature and become givers who are self less minding more of others than ourselves. (Romans 5:6-8).

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:6-8

You and I were weak spiritually because of our sins and because we were without God and because our spirit had died and the body became weak and God had to command Christ toward us by his love for us so as to make us spiritually strong again by our faith in him. (Romans 8:3-6). Now how does this love work? (1 John 3:18).

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in need and in truth.

1 John 3:18

We are told that the love of God is in action (deed) and also in truth (not hypocritical). So, it is not a matter of just talking but in giving as well. Love is a sign of obedience to God and leads one to give unconditionally.

AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and Said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest and get thee into the land of Mo-ri'-ah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went un to the place of which God had told him.

Genesis 22:1-3

Abraham loved God (the giver) more than (the gift) God had given him (his son Isaac) - Yes, even children God gives to us (Psalm 127:3)

So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shi'-loh, and after they had drunk. Now E-li the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD.

And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one e'-phah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shi'-loh: and the child was young.

And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to E'-li.

And she said, Oh my Lord, as thy soul liveth, my Lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD.

For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshiped the LORD there.

1 Samuel 1:9-11, 24-28

Here we see this woman Hannah who was a God-fearing woman being obedient to God by giving back her child Samuel back to God as per her vow when she was praying to God and weeping bitterly. Although she loved her child, she gave him out to go and serve the Lord. (Ecclesiastes 5:1-5)

MOREOVER, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Mac-e-do'-ni-a;
How that in great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberty.
For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;
Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.
And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5

Here in the above scripture we see how Apostle Paul commended the acts (deeds) of the Macedonian churches who though were poor but gave beyond their power to the saints elsewhere in other churches. Now one may ask, what motivated them to do all that despite all that they were going through? It was love. They first gave their own selves (lives) to Christ Jesus and then gave to the apostle for the sake of other brethren. Lovers are givers. First one must give oneself to God through Jesus Christ and then one will be in a position to give to others selflessly without being forced to do so but just willingly. Love is so strong and the Lord commanded his disciples to love one another.

For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

1 John 3:11-12

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.
In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.
Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

1 John 4:7-11

Let us now look again and see how powerful love is.

And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.
And, behold, there was a man named Zac-che'-us, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.
And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.
And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.
And when Jesus came to that place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zac-che'-us, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.

And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmered, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

And Zac-che'-us, stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

And Jesus said unto him, this day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

For the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost.

Luke 19:1-10

Now this rich man Zacchaeus was a tax collector and he must have become rich through tax collection at his place of work as some people usually foolishly say 'You eat where you work' meaning taking bribes from those you serve, which is sin in God's sight. This must have been so for he confessed about taking things falsely from people though he said by false accusation (the Bible says what you say comes from the abundance of your heart). Although Zacchaeus was a rich man, he was not a happy man at all (most likely his conscience kept on convicting him within, of his evil deeds) and that is why he sought to see Jesus,

because he was spiritually sick in the heart and needed a physician (remember Matthew's case what the Lord told the Pharisees in the book of Matthew- (Matthew 9:9-12). Surely Zacchaeus was gone to see a Great Physician who heals the spiritual man in people. Jesus looked up and saw him where he was and ordered him to quickly come down. If one needs Jesus, one must come down (must be on one's knees/must humble oneself). You don't get Jesus while still in pride, No. You must be broken in heart first (Psalm 51:17). And when you receive Christ, you receive joy. Zacchaeus confessed / repented of his sins and was forgiven and received salvation and straight away began to give. All this time he was rich he was among the poor but only decided to be giving to the poor when he got saved. All this time he was on the receiving end, receiving from the publications and hardly giving. But now by his true repentance and faith in Christ, he became a son of Abraham (Roman 4:1-5, 13-16).

Chapter 3

Giving is a command

Now what many have not known is that giving is a commandment from God. You may have heard from the uninformed uttering such words as “I am not going to give because the money is going to be just spent by so and so, it is not for God” or “The people of this church are forcing people to give offerings” and so on and so forth. Although it is a command to give, it is for the benefit of the giver, and in fact has nothing to lose.

Yes, the money is going to be used by so and so, so what? they are servants of the Lord if they are ministering to you and some like other pastors (priests) for example from the Old Testament days were full time ministers of the Lord and were not allowed even to possess ancestral land, how then do you expect these to earn a living? You give as God commands and stop worrying how it will be spent, do your part.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, He that offereth the sacrifice of his peace offerings unto the LORD shall

bring his oblation unto the LORD of the sacrifice of his peace offerings.

His own hands shall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire, the fat with the breast, it shall he bring, that the breast may be waved for a wave offering before the LORD.

And the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar: but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons.

And the right shoulder shall ye give unto the priest for a heave offering of the sacrifices of your peace offerings.

He among the sons of Aaron, that offereth the blood of the peace offerings, and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for his part.

For the wave breast and the heave shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel from off the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them unto Aaron the priest and unto his sons by a statute for ever from among the children of Israel.

This is the portion of the anointing of Aaron, and of the anointing of his sons, out of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, in the day when he presented then to minister unto the LORD in the priest's office;

Which the LORD commanded to be given them of the children of Israel, in the day he anointed them, by a statute for ever throughout their generations.

This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings;

Which the LORD commanded Moses in mount Si'-nai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the LORD, in the wilderness of Si'-nai.

Leviticus 7:28-38

The scripture above talks of those giving offerings to do so by their own hands. But some people have been sending to church the others, to take for them their offerings that they are busy because of this or that. I think many people today have forgotten totally what God expect of them in various areas of their lives.

And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.

And if a man will at all redeem aught of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.

And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.

These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Si'-nai.

Leviticus 27:30-34

And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their have service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Numbers 18:20-21

AND when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits to cast them out,

and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: the first Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zeb-e-dee, and John his brother;

Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Al-phe'-us, and Leb-be'us, whose surname was Thad-de'-us;

Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Sa-mar'-i-tans enter ye not:

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devil: freely ye have received, freely give.

Matthew 10:1-8

The apostles were commanded by the Lord to give free service and not to charge people, unlike what is happening today in many churches where they demand money to consult a pastor or to be prayed for which is sin.

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings

Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:8-10

Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.

Say not unto thy neighbor, Go, and come again, and tomorrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

Proverbs 3:27-28

If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother.

But thou shalt open thy hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying,

The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto.

For the poor shall never cease out of the land. Therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-handed, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

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

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

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

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

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

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

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

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

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

Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

Then shall he answer them, saying, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Matthew 25:31-46

From the above scripture we get a very important lesson on the act of giving. By giving you show the love of God and your obedience to his command and you are counted righteous and your future place is eternal life in heaven with the Lord. You need to give to those that are in need regardless of who they are and not being discriminatory. Without righteousness there is no eternal life (Revelation 19:6-9). I am talking of the righteousness done while in Christ Jesus. The scripture I have put in bracket and verse 8 is talking of righteousness of saints and not any other. Are you a saint? If so, well and good live righteously. If not a saint, why not? What are you waiting for? It is time you did become one and begin to live righteously in Christ Jesus for your sweet life (soul).

Is it not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?
Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Isaiah 58:6-7

All the above and especially the second verse (verse 7) talks of giving, giving and giving.

If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:
For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head and the LORD shall reward thee.

Proverbs 25:21-22

It looks quite a tall order to do but by the grace of God one can do it.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Philippians 2:4

Not only our welfare should matter to us but the welfare of others too, if they are faring well in life and if not, if we can assist in any way however little, if we are a bit better than them.

And when James, Ce'-phas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that

we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

Galatians 2:9-10

It should be clear that although giving is a command, it should not be used as an excuse for refusing to go: for a Christian fellowship, a crusade or attend a church service as you are going to see in this scripture.

Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

And he leaping up stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God.

Acts 3:1-8

In that scripture it is true that the apostles had no money with them to be able to give some alms to the lame man as they were going into the temple before God. But they had Jesus with them and who healed the lame man. Some pastors I hear them quote a scripture in the Old Testament in some churches that God told the children of Israel that they should not go before him bare handed – meaning without some kind of offering. But they are mistaken as that was a period characterized with the Torah/Laws unlike now which is a period of grace. Moreover, God is not interested much more in sacrifices and offerings but the souls of men and women as he lacks nothing materially (Psalm 50:7-15). Still other pastors quote the scripture in the New Testament trying to persuade them to part with

their money saying, The Bible says it is more blessed to give than to receive which is true (Acts 20:35) but let us not try to arm-twist people on their money but have our priorities right in the first place and all the rest will be automatic coming out a loving heart (2 Corinthians 8:1-5). Some pastors have a heart for the love of money and therefore would spend much time at the pulpit persuading the congregation to part with something than to bring them to Christ or encourage them to live a holy and righteous life and to repent of any sin committed. Now that is quite a contrast to what the apostles in the early church did (Acts 2,3,4,5 and so on).

Some people foolishly feel that if they attend say a church service with an empty hand they will be ashamed before the congregation when it is time for paying tithes and giving offerings as they have nothing to part with and will be sitting on their seats or standing like a statue doing nothing. God is most concerned with our souls for eternity in heaven and not with our substances which will remain here on earth when we exit (Job 1). Rather, more emphasis needs to be in exhorting Christians to repent of any sin in life and to live a righteous and holy life.

Chapter 4

The benefits in Giving

If you give, your giving is not in vain in the name of the Lord. It will surely benefit you in one way or the other now or later. Some may think, in giving, it is like throwing away your money etc. etc., no.

He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

Proverbs 28:27

I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Acts 20:35

In our service to the Lord we need to support the weak in the society- the widows and orphans and the poor. It is the Lord Jesus Christ himself who said it is more blessed to give than to receive. Satan has given some the impression in the opposite, that it is more blessed to receive than to give, watch out!

Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Philippians 4:15-20

The above scripture corroborates the fact that it is more blessed to give than to receive (see verses 16 and 17).

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

Proverbs 11:24

Yes, some give out and find still they have more whereas on the other hand, some try to keep to themselves what they have but they find they continue just to have a little. So the solution is give out and give out as God is not a man that he can lie. (Numbers 23:19).

He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

Proverbs 22:9

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Galatians 6:9-10

We are encouraged to do good which is righteousness for we are going to be rewarded for it by the Lord at the right time. So, we should try and not let an opportunity pass by without using it and we should not stop at doing this.

Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:10-12

He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again

Proverbs 19:17

Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase:

So shall thy barns be filled with new wine.

Proverbs 3:9-10

CAST thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

Ecclesiastes 11:1, 6

BLESSED is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.

The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies

The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou will make all his bed in his sickness

Psalm 41:1-3

And it fell on a day, that E-li'-sha passed to Shu'-nem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by he turned in thither to eat bread.

And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually.

Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.

And he said to Ge-ha'-zi his servant, call this Shu'-nam-mite.

And when he had called her, she stood before him.

And he said unto him, say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee?

Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people.

And he said, what then is to be done for her? And Ge-ha-zi answered, verily she hath no child, and her husband is old.

And he said, call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door.

And he said, about this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my Lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid.

And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Eli'-sha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

2 Kings 4:8-17

A good man showeth favor, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.

He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honor.

Psalm 112: 5-9

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the

naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rearward.

Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day:

And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

Isaiah 58:6-12

Just marvelous. Look at all the promises of God in the above scripture for those who are ready to live righteously.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;
That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

So, the riches in this world are uncertain riches and only in God there are certain riches which last forever! That good works lays for you and me a good foundation that can make you and me hold on eternal life, how encouraging! It is good to trust in the Lord and do good, period.

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.
Let us go forth therefore unto him without camp, bearing his reproach.
For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.
But to do good and communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Hebrews 13:12-16

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

James 1:27

Now giving is in two fronts and what I have talked about is centered more on one front and that is on giving of one's possessions (money and materials) but now I am going to touch on the other front and that is oneself in serving the Lord and not necessarily in giving out things but in giving out services. First, I will touch on service and later go back again to possession. I begin with the life of Noah.

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.
And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Ja'-pheth.

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

And God looked upon the earth,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Genesis 6:9-22

Noah was warned of the coming judgement on the face of the earth and instructed to build an ark to preserve life and although it was a humongous task, Noah offered himself to accomplish the task at hand and for sure he did it. No wonder God described him as a just and perfect man. For his service the Lord remembered him as we read in the epistle to the Hebrews.

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

Hebrews 11:7

Now let me turn you to Moses the servant of God.

And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

Exodus 5:1

And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent me?

For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

THEN the LORD said unto Moses Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.

And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD:

And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JE-HO-VAH was I not known to them.

And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.

Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:

And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for an heritage: I am the LORD.

And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.

Exodus 5:22-6:11

AND the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might show these my signs before him:

And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD.

And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me.

Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow will I bring the locusts in to thy coast:

And they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which growth for you out of the field:

And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day. And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh.

Exodus 10:1-6

All the above scriptures from the book of Exodus we see Moses was chosen by God to lead the children of Israel from the land of Egypt to the promised land and which he gave himself to do as was instructed by the Lord. Please read also in the same book the following: Exodus 15:22-26; 32:1-32 and 34:27-35, From them you will see Moses God's servant interceding for the children of Israel and also going without food or drink in order to receive yet again the ten commandments from the Lord. God remembered Moses in the epistle to the Hebrews.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

Hebrews 11:24-27

Let me now take you to a list of some servants of the Lord who because of their service they lived a long life and a peaceful death save for one Enoch who was raptured into Heaven, the benefit of serving the Lord.

1. Enoch

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

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

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

Genesis 5:21-24

2. Noah

And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

Genesis 9:28-29

3. Abraham

And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old ye.

Genesis 15:15

And these are the days of the years of Abraham’s life which he lived, a hundred three score and fifteen years.

Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

Genesis 25:7-8

4. Isaac

And the days of Isaac were a hundred and fourscore years.

And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Genesis 35:28-29

5. Jacob

And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was a hundred forty and seven years.

And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt:

But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said.

And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

Genesis 47:28-31

6. Joseph

And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Genesis 50:24-26

7. Moses

And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

Deuteronomy 34:7

8. Joshua

And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being a hundred and ten years old.

Joshua 24:29

9 David

Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel.

And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he is He'-bron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

1 Chronicles 29:26-28

10. Job

After this lived Job a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

So Job died, being old and full of days

Job 42:16-17

Now let me take you to just a few examples, before I end this chapter, of what they did and how God dealt with them.

Abel

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

And she again bare his brother Abel, and Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

And Abel, he also brought of the first lings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

Genesis 4:1-4

Whence also he received him in a figure.

Hebrews 11: 17-19

Jacob

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

So that I came again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God:

And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

Genesis 28:20-22

That Jacob gave after God appearing to him in a dream. Jacob must have kept the vow as we are later told how had much possessions.

And the man increased exceedingly and had much cattle, and maidservants and menservants, and camels, and asses.

Genesis 30:43

Solomon

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And God said unto him, because thou hast asked this thing and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked for the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgement.

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

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

And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

1 Kings 3:3-14

Solomon we are told loved the Lord. If you love, you will give. Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings at an altar in Gibeon. I think he broke the record in the whole land of Israel. I have never come across a person who offered so much at an altar of the Lord.

We are told the Lord appeared to Solomon there and Solomon was granted what he asked for and much more.

Job

So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

He had also seven sons and three daughters.

And he called the name of the first, Je-mi'-ma; and the name of the second, Ke-zi'-a; and the name of the third, Ker'-en-hap'-puch.

And in all the land were no woman found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

Job 42:12-15

Now how did Job end there? Read chapter one and two in the book of Job and see for yourself how he cared for the welfare of his children and continually offered sacrifices to God on the same and how he was trusting in the Lord steadfastly regardless of bitter experiences in life.

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

Hebrews 11:4

Abraham

And blessed be the most High God, which had delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

Genesis 14:20

AND the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mam'-re: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;
And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground.

And said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant.

Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, so do, as thou hast said.

And Abraham hasted into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.

And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree and thy did eat.

And they said unto him, where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, Lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

Genesis 18:1-10

You can see that Abraham paid all his tithes and also was hospitable to visitors (actually angels) and he was promised a son whom they got as per the time promised (Genesis 21:1-3). Further if you read on from verse 11 onwards to chapter 19, you see how Abraham was revealed to what the Lord intended to do in the twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and how Abraham interceded and Lot and his family were rescued by the angels from the judgement that followed.

AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.
And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Mo'-ri'-ah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.
And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his aass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Genesis 22:1-3

You see, Abraham was ready to sacrifice his son Isaac for a burnt offering and was now off to do just that but God intervened on time and renewed his covenant with him because of his obedience (verses 4 to 18). Further, Abraham was also blessed with possessions and God testified about him in the epistle to the Hebrews.

AND Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife and all that he had and Lot with him, into the South.
And Abram was very rich in cattle in silver, and in gold.

Genesis 13:1-2

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered by Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,
Of whom it was said, that is Isaac shall thy seed be called:
According that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Hebrews 11:17-19

Elijah

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

Arise, get thee to Zar'-e-phath, which belongeth to Zi'-don, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

So he arose and went to Zar'-e-phath. And, when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat, and die.

And E-li'-jah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

And she went and did according to the saying of E-li'-jah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by E-li'-jah.

1 Kings 17:8-16

From the above account you can see that this widow at Zarephath survived the famine of three years when there was no rain at all in that city simply because she chose to give a drink, and food to the man of God who happened to be a prophet. At first the widow although lacked some faith, was faithful by admitting frankly what she had. The widow because of the situation at hand had fear for lack of food which was eminent but the prophet of the Lord instilled some faith in her by hopeful and assurance words and the next thing we see her now ready to part with the little food she was left with and that was her salvation / deliverance from starvation and death. Her fears were now over. Many people the enemy instil fear in them when they begin to lack or have very little left for their upkeep, thinking that all hope is gone and they are going to die. No, you are not going to die, just believe in God and in his prophets, just as this widow of Zarephath did. (2 Chronicles 20:20).

Now from the above account if the widow disobeyed what she was told by the prophet, she would actually have died and her son most likely as she had already thought in her mind - 'As a man thinks….' Get to know that bad or negative thoughts are usually from the Devil, such as fear. Many people are not sincere such as this widow because they would say, 'I have nothing totally' or in case some body knocked on the door and they had their last meal and will have nothing in the next meal, can even hide that and so on, before opening the door to the person knocking the door.

The bad thing is that they think the person will not know, true most likely except one walking in the Spirit it may be unlikely but all the same, they have forgotten all together that God sees and knows everything, everywhere all the time. Further, such people are denying themselves a blessing from God by being stingy. Be ready to give, be it to a neighbor, a stranger, a relative, whether they are saints or sinners, if they give a thank you, good but even if they don't, God has already acknowledged and any angel has recorded that act in your file in heaven. There in heaven everything is recorded of each human being is life here on earth every time on a daily basis, be it good or bad.

Chapter 5

Some ways of Giving

Now if one looks at the scriptures, one will find that in every giving there is a name, meaning and a purpose. There are many ways of giving but we are going to look at some of them and which are mostly common in nature.

1. Tithe

And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD

And if a man will at all redeem aught of his tithes, he shall add thereto, the fifth part thereof.

And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change there of shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.

These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Si'-nai.

Leviticus 27:30-34

And the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.
At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates:
And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee, fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

Deuteronomy 14:27-29

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:10

A tithe is paid to the Lord as it belongs to him. The tithe is a portion of whatever the Lord blesses a person with as you have seen and is one tenth of that. It acknowledges the ownership of God over all that we possess and shows obedience to the Lord by so doing. The tithe should be paid

to the church where one gets spiritual nourishment (the local church).

2. The first fruits

Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase:

Proverbs 3:9

Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the fist-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it to me.

Exodus 22:29-30

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, when ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest:

Leviticus 23:9-10

All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock thou shall sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.

Deuteronomy 15:19

AND it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein;
That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there.

Deuteronomy 26:1-2

When you are giving the first fruits from your farm the norm is to take the best part of the farm produce to the Lord and not left-overs. By doing that you are acknowledging that all belong to God and that you are giving your gratitude to him.

By giving your first fruits you are showing honor to the Lord. It involves giving all or part of what you have

received from the Lord for the first time say from employment (first salary), business (first profit), Farming (first harvest), Livestock (firstborn the flock) etc. etc. – give us the Spirit leads you to give.

3. Love offering

NOW concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

And when I came, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem

And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

MOREOVER, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Mac-e-do'-ni'-a;

How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;
Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

2 Corinthians 8:1-4

The above is done as a sign of supporting the work of ministries of the Lord and is not measured but as one decides / feels in one's heart.

4. Thanksgiving offering

O GIVE thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.
Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.

Psalm 105:1-2

The above is given as a token of appreciation for what the Lord has done eg for getting a safe journey, getting a promotion or any other such as getting a healing. This also can be given as one decides to do.

5. Alms

He that giveth to the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

Proverbs 28:27

The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.

Proverbs 29:7

TAKE heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

Therefore when doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

Matthew 6:1-4

The above is normally given out to the poor as well as widows and orphans and here as well, one can give according to what one has and as purposed in one's heart. It is secret-giving and is meant to assist them in bringing some relief in the condition they are in.

And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.
And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, why was this waste of the ointment made?
For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.
And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work: but me ye have not always.

Mark 14: 1-7

Giving to the poor, the widows and orphans is alms giving, and is an act of righteousness and mind you, God loves righteousness as he is a righteous God and is full of

righteousness and definitely will reward it. It is given as a gift to individuals.

6. Vows

When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

Deuteronomy 23:21-23

When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which that hast vowed.

Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hand?

Ecclesiastes 5:4-6

Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jeph'-thah, and he passed over Gil'-e-ad, and Ma-nas'-seh, and passed over Miz'-peh of Gil'-e-ad, and from Miz'-peh of Gild'-e-ad he passed over unto the children of Ammon.

And Jeph'-phah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,

Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD'S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

So Jeph-thah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands.

And he smote them from A-ro'-er, even till thou come to Min'-ni-th, even twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

And Jeph'-phah came to Miz'-peh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter.

And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, alas, my daughter! Though hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD and I can not go back.

And she said unto him, my father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.

And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: Let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows.

And he said, go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains.

And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel,

That the daughters of Israel went yearly, to lament the daughter of Jeph'-thah the Gil'-e-adite four days in a year.

Judges 11:29-40

Now before I go to the last scripture on vows, the above incidence is quite a sad one indeed. Vows, just like tithes, if not paid, they have far reaching consequences. No wonder we have been clearly warned in the book of Ecclesiastes to be careful about vows (Ecclesiastes 5: 1-6) the same applies to Tithes and offerings in the book of Malachi (Malachi 3:8-9).

From the case of Jephthah, we see that things were just okay from verse 29 to 33 and then from verse 34 to 40 it was just a bitter pill to swallow-just look at what Jephthah said to her daughter and her daughter said to her, it was very painful indeed. The daughter I believe was quite a disciplined and loving girl having been a virgin and having welcomed her father so warmly unaware of what had transpired. This also is as heart touching as in the case of Job (Job 1:1-2:10). Vow making is serious business as one must pay at whatever cost to avoid the consequences. May the Lord help us, that is my prayer, in Jesus' name, Amen.

The next scripture follows.

So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shi'-loh, and after they had drunk. Now E'-li the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD.

And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that E'-li marked her mouth.

Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore E'-li though she had been drunken.

And E'-li said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee.

And Hannah answered and said, No, my Lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunken neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD.

Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Be'li-al: for out of the abundance of my complaint, and grief I have spoken hitherto.

Then E'-li answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him.

And she said, let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned and came to their house to Ra'-mah: and El-ka'-nah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.

Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, because I have asked him of the LORD.

And the man El-ka'-nah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow.

But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever.

And El-ka'nah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tary until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode and gave her son a suck until she weaned him.

And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one e'phah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shi'-loh: and the child was young.

And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to E'-li.

And she said, Oh my Lord, as thy soul liveth, my Lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD.

For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given my petition which I asked of him:

Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.

1 Samuel 1:9-28

Now vows involve covenant giving and the one making a vow prays to God telling him "If you do to me this, I will do to you this"

7. Pledges

These can be considered as voluntary, saying that you are going to support a church activity eg project for building, by promising to give so much money or material for that cause. This also, one need to see to it that you fulfill it by

doing exactly what you promised and not fall short in any way in that respect. It can be said in business language that you have given out a promissory note for the project, which of course must be paid. Pledges are given for a particular cause.

AND the LORD spake unto the Moses, saying,
Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.
And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass,
And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goat' hair,
And rams' skins dyed red, and badger's skins, and Shit'-tim wood,
Oil for the light, spices for anointing. Oil, and for sweet incense. Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the e'phod, and in the breast-plate.
And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

Exodus 25:1-9

And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

Leviticus 25:35

You can relieve your brother who is poor by giving him what he lacks be he a stranger.

Thou shalt not pervert the judgement of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge:
But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing

Deuteronomy 24:17-18

The Lord requires also that we give justice to strangers and orphans as well. God saw that justice is very important because he is a God of justice and gives right justice to all regardless of who one is.

Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

Matthew 5:42

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

For where your treasure is there will be your heart be also.

Matthew 6:19-21

The Lord I believe meant that we should not keep much possessions here on earth without giving out to others who totally lack because they can be destroyed or stolen in the process of accumulating them but rather by sharing some

Sacrificial Giving

There is yet another giving which is known as sacrificial giving and which is unique and special because it is bent more on quality and not quantity and involves the giving out of what one loves and cherishes in life.

The following are examples of sacrificial giving.

(a) God

God is a perfect example of sacrificial giving from the Scripture.

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

John 3:16

(b) Abel

Abel too is another example of sacrificial giving.

AND Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.
And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.
And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.
And **Abel**, he also **brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:**

But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

Genesis 4:1-5

(c) Abraham

Abraham is another example of sacrificial giving.

AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham; and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Mo-ri'ah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and knife; and they went both of them together.

And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, My son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham:

And he said, Here am I.

And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jire: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Genesis 22:1-18

(d) The widow of Zarephath.

This widow of Zarephath is another example of sacrificial giving.

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,
Arise, get thee to Zar'e-phath, which belongeth to Zi'-don, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

So he arose and went to Zar'-e-phath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

And E-li'-jah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

And she went and did according to the saying of E-li'-jah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by E-li'-jah.

1 Kings 17:8-16

(e) The poor widow

Here is another example of sacrificial giving by the poor widow.

AND he looked up, and saw the rich man casting their gifts into the treasury.

And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

And he said, of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:
For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

Luke 21:1-4

(f) The woman with an alabaster box

The woman with an alabaster box is another example of sacrificial giving.

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,
There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.
But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, to what purpose is this waste?
For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.
When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me.

For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.
For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.
Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Matthew 26:6-13

(g) Believers in the early Church

The believers in the early church are another example of sacrificial giving.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.
And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Acts 4:31-35

MOREOVER, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on **the churches of Mac-e-do'-ni-a;**

How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and **their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.**

For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

2 Corinthians 8:1-4

(h) The children Israelites

THEN wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded.

And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholib, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:

And they received of Moses all offerings, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it withal. And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning.

And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made:

And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the LORD commanded to make.

Exodus 36:1-5

(i) King David

FURTHERMORE David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the LORD God.

Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance.

Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house,

Even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal:

The Gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?

1 Chronicles 29:1-5

By giving sacrificially one shows one's faith and trust in God.

Warning

Do not donate your money or wealth to unworthy causes, or people e.g. False ministers of the word of God, illegal Institutions or businesses, as you will have defiled it and cannot be blessed.

Chapter 6

Conditions in Giving

Giving is not to be done just any how as giving according to God has its conditions which involve one's motive and attitude at the time of giving. Also, we need to know that in giving we need to give in a way that pleases God and so that he accepts it and blesses us as well or else he can reject it. We are therefore going to look at some of those conditions that need to be met in giving.

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

Deuteronomy 16:17

In the above scripture we find that people need to give according to their ability, therefore one should not force oneself to give beyond what one has been blessed with by the Lord. This, the Lord was telling the children of Israel about the Passover feast, but can also apply to Christians today in their giving, as we are going to see in some other scriptures concerning love offerings in supporting the work of God and also giving of alms to the widows, the orphans and the poor.

NOW concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.
Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Every Sunday one need to set aside some gift out of what God has blessed one with and to bring in a Sunday service to be collected and kept in the church treasury for use whenever necessary by ministering saints.

But this I say, the which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.
Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.
And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:
(As it is written, he hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth forever.

Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

2 Corinthians 9:6-11

We have been told in the above Scripture that our giving should be done cheerfully and without any grudge and that we should give as we have purposed in our heart. Further, our blessing is likely going to depend on how much we have given. That is in agreement with the book of Luke (Luke 6:38).

MOREOVER, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

2 Corinthians 8:1-4

The church at Macedonia gave their gifts willingly

Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

2 Corinthians 8:24

In that scripture we do see the giving in love which is quite commendable.

Now he that ministered seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

2 Corinthians 9:10-12

There is need to give thankfully before God. Above all these we first need to give ourselves to the Lord (2 Corinthians 8:5).

TAKE heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

But when thou doest alms, Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee only.

Matthew 6:1-4

The above has to do with the giving of alms. I believe that should apply also in any other collections in a church service. Unfortunately, it is not the case with many churches who sound trumpets just like in political rallies, fund-raising meeting etc calling people's names saying so and so has brought here so much, clap for him'. Therefore, it is unscriptural to happen like that in a church. What it actually does to most people is to give unnecessary pride in the heart of one giving out much and unnecessarily belittling in the heart of one giving just a relatively small

amount compared to the others. It treats the whole collection as a competition of some sort.
The condition of the heart God puts into consideration when one gives an offering so it is important to examine one's life before presenting any offering before God.

Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Go-mor'-rah.
To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.
When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?
Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.
Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me: I am weary to bear them.
And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from mine eyes; cease to do evil;
Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Isaiah 1:10-17

THUS saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? And where is the place of my rest?
For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.
He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

Isaiah 66:1-3

Now if you look keenly at the two scriptures you find that God is not happy and disapproves the act of giving offerings to him by the people of Judah and Jerusalem. But

why; when it was customary to do so? It is because of the condition of their hearts. They lived in sin not obeying God and were guilty yet continued with giving of offerings and sacrifices. They had compromised God's holiness by their giving and that became a mere religious ritual before God. The mere act of giving is not enough before God but he expects a life of reverence to him - a life of obedience and which cannot be substituted by giving offerings. If it was so for the Israelites, it is even more so with Christians. We have to live a life of obedience to the word of God, then and only them, can he accept/approve our giving to him be it tithes, the first fruits, thanksgiving offerings, love offerings or alms. That is why God through Prophet Samuel told king Saul that obedience is better than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:20-23).

If one is living in disobedience God rejects him or her plus whatever he or she may be ready to offer to God. What many of us have failed to know is that God is more interested in the state of our soul than what we give as an offering or a sacrifice. He wants our souls more than our gifts. We can give our souls to God only by our obedience to him. The state of our souls needs to be right first then our giving can follow. Now take time and read the

following scriptures and you will find that one need to give the best / perfect to God (Exodus 12:1-6, Leviticus 1:1-10, 3:1-6; 4:1-3, 22-31, 27-28, 32; 5:14-19; 6:1-7; 9:1-2). Now please note that it was during the Old Testament but it is the same in the New Testament as well as God never changes just as his word too (Hebrews 13:5-8, Matthew 5:17-18).

Chapter 7

Unacceptable Giving

When giving, your giving must be reasonable otherwise it might be unacceptable before the Lord. We are going now to look at some scriptures that enlighten us on gifts that are unacceptable.

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

And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground on offering unto the LORD.

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen?

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

Genesis 4:1-7

From the above account you can see that both these two brothers Cain and Abel presented (gave) their offering to the Lord but not all was acceptable to the Lord. God did not accept (did not respect) the offering of Cain. The question is, why did God accept Abel's offering and not Cain's? The answer is because Cain offered carelessly without any due respect to God. No wonder God did not give any respect to Cain and his offering. God says in his word 'Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets' (Matthew 7:12). You can also look at Galatians 6:7-8 and Hebrews 11:4 - you are going to see that one need to use one's heart and not one's head when going to give.

Abel gave his offering to God with an understanding of God's ways as he was wiser than his brother Cain for he followed God's pattern of blood sacrifice, as is recorded in chapter 3 of the same book (Genesis 3:21) and God was pleased by Abel's sacrifice (Hebrews 11:4). It seems that Jacob too was wiser than his brother Esau by having a more

understanding of spiritual matters as is recorded in the same book of Genesis (Genesis 25:21-34). He knew how important a birthright is and which his brother Esau had as the first born in their family.

And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the pass over of the LORD.
And in the fifteenth day of the month is the feast: seven days shall be unleavened bread be eaten.
In the first day shall be a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein:
But **ye shall offer a sacrifice made by fire for a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first, year: they shall be unto you without blemish:**
And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil: three tenth deals shall ye offer for a bullock, and two tenth deals for a ram;
A several tenth deal shalt thou offer for every lamb, throughout the seven lambs:
And one goat for a sin offering, to make an atonement for you.

Ye shall offer these beside the burnt offering in the morning, which is for a continual burnt offering.

After this manner ye shall offer daily, throughout the seven days, the meat of the sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the LORD: it shall be offered beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.

And on the seventh day ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.

Also in the day of the first fruits, when ye bring a new meat offering unto the LORD, after your weeks be out, ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work:

But ye shall offer the burnt offering for a sweet savor unto the LORD; two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of the first year;

And their meat offering of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals unto one bullock, two tenth deals unto one ram,

A several tenth deal unto one lamb, throughout the seven lambs;

And one kid of the goats, to make an atonement for you.

Several tenth deal unto one lamb, throughout the seven lambs;

And one kid of the goats, to make an atonement for you.

Ye shall offer them beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, (they shall be unto you without blemish) and their drink offerings.

AND in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you.

And ye shall offer a burnt offering for a sweet savor unto the LORD; one young bullock, one ram, and seven Lambs of the first year without blemish:

And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals for a bullock, and two tenth deals for a ram,

And one tenth deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

And one kid of the goats for a sin offering, to make an atonement for you:

Beside the burnt offering of the month, and his meat offering, and the daily burnt offering, and his meat offering, and their drink offerings, according unto their manner, for a sweet savor, a sacrifice made by fire on the LORD.

And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month a holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work therein:

But **ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD for a sweet savor; one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you without blemish:**

And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals to a bullock, and two tenth deals to one ram,

A several tenth deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

One kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the sin offering of atonement, and the continual burnt offering, and the meat offering of it, and their drink offerings.

And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month ye shall have a holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work, and ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days:

And ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the LORD; thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year; they shall be without blemish:

And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals unto even bullock of the thirteen bullocks, two tenth deals to each ram of the two rams,

And a several tenth deal to each lamb of the fourteen lambs:

And one kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering and his drink offering.

And on the second day ye shall offer twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner.

And one kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and the meat offering thereof, and their drink offerings.

And on the third day eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish;

And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

And on the fourth day ten bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

Their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

And one kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

And on the fifth day nine bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

And on the sixth day eight bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

And on the seventh day seven bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

And one goat for a sin offering beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly: ye shall do no servile work therein:

But ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the LORD: one bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish:

Their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

These things ye shall do unto the LORD in your set feasts, beside your vows, and your free will offerings, for your burnt offerings, and for your meat offerings, and for your drink offerings, and for your peace offerings.

And Moses told the children of Israel according to all that the LORD commanded Moses.

Numbers 28:16-29:40

In the above scripture there are five yearly feasts which the Lord God appointed and told Moses his servant that the children of Israel were to observe and so Moses told them just as God had commanded him. Now what comes out clearly from the commandments is that the offerings were to be without blemish / spot.

It follows therefore that if they offered one with a blemish / spot then it was unacceptable to the Lord God. God told them to do so as he himself had prepared to give a perfect sacrifice for the atonement of sin once for all mankind by offering the best (his own beloved Son) at the appointed time and which was going to give him the sweetest aroma (John 3:16, Romans 3:21-26, Hebrews 7:11-25; 9:11-15, 24-26, 10:8-10).

The children of Israel were but a shadow of the Church of Christ therefore the Church really need to offer the best/the choicest/ a perfect offering to the Lord as God the Father is perfect, same to God the Son. Now Christians don't give offerings for the atonement of sins as the children of Israel did as Jesus Christ already had paid the full price on the

cross at Calvary (John 19:16-30, 1 Peter 1: 18-19) but now give in obedience to the commandment of the Lord and also out of love. Therefore, in all our giving we need to give not necessarily quantitatively but qualitatively in order for it to be acceptable to the Lord. We need not be careless and casual in giving to the Lord.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the stranger of Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering;
Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.
But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you.
And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.

Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.

Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your hand.

Neither from a stranger's hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption is in them: they shall not be accepted for you.

Leviticus 22:17-25

From the above you can see for yourself that a perfect sacrifice is what God accepts from us. We need to be careful and check our offering before we present it before the Lord. Let as keenly look at our gift and seen if it has any imperfection. So actually, I can say giving is not so simple as many have taken it to be. Giving is an art and an act. So, we nee to be sober in giving. Let me say something at this juncture that I have noticed in some churches on a few occasions. At the time of giving tithes and offerings in a church service you find some giving it with their left hand

and some giving and at the same time trying to get a change from the offering basket. I do believe God is not happy with such behaviours. If you are a right-handed person why use a left hand when giving to God? Similarly, when going to a church service, don't go there like a fool. From your house decide what you are going to give (all your offerings) then have a change for each so that for example if you intend to go give a love offering of say Kshs 100, don't go with a Kshs 200 or Kshs 500 note, and then begin to behave foolishly as I have narrated above, have a Kshs 100 note when you give and forget about it after giving it out.

Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying,
It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.
And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on and gone down to Gil'gal.

And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD and Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

And Saul said, They have brought them from the A-mal'-ek-ites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

Then Samuel said unto Saul, stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, say on.

And Samuel said, when thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

And the Lord set thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the A-mal'-ek-ites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD and have gone the way which the LORD sent

me, and have brought Agag the king of A-mal'-ek-ites have utterly destroyed the A-mal'-ek-ites.

But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gil'-gal.

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

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast also rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

1 Samuel 15:10-23

The Lesson we learn from the above account is that God regards partial obedience as disobedience and that our efforts in trying to do what seems to be right in our eyes such as giving a sacrifice to God while we are not obedient to his word he will disapprove us and not accept our sacrifice (James 2:8-10). We just need first to put things right between us and the others as well as with God before we go to offer something to God (Matthew 5:23-26; 6:9-15).

Whereas it seemed right to offer sacrifice to God, but the state of the people and their king was wanting before God and they in essence disqualified themselves before God.

Saul tried in vain in trying to sanitize his actions by giving lame excuses such as the sparing of the livestock for sacrifice to the Lord God and which seemed like a bribe to blind God/cover his sinful acts to God but God is incorruptible (Deuteronomy 10:14-17) and God disapproved the acts and rejected him from being king of Israel.

Although giving is a righteous act (Acts 20:35), but is not an end in itself but need to be supported by or her righteous acts. What matters most to God is obedience to him in all things. If one is living a holy and righteous life in obedience to God his or her offerings to God is acceptable. One must repent of his or her sin to God to be forgiven and be in a right standing before God and not to try justify sin as Adam and Eve did after disobeying God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-13) as it will not help one (Genesis 3:14-19).

BUT a certain man named An-a-ni’as, with Sapph-i’-ra his wife, sold a possession,

And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

But Peter said, An-a-ni'-as, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

And An-a-ni'-as hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, yea, for so much.

Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to temp the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

Then fell she down straight way at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

Act 5: 1-10

From the above incidence you can see that giving is serious business which should be done carelessly at all. It was a most unfortunate thing to have happened, which could have been avoided if the two (husband and wife) could have gone by their hearts instead of thy minds. If you begin reading that book in chapter 4 and verses 31 to 37, you will see the trend of the church (believers), only in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, they did not remain faithful in their intention to give in for the work of God. Rather these two became insincere by changing their mind because Satan tempted them in their mind. 'This money you have sold your land and received is so much, why give al in church, part with some for your shopping', that is the kind of message they may have received from the devil and they fell for it thinking it is a good idea forgetting what they had purposed in their heart.

Unfortunately for them, the Holy Spirit was present and they reached the temple where the brethren were and the anointing was so much (mind you the believers had just

received yet another infilling of the Holy Spirit) (Acts 4:31) and they could not pass the test- No lying, No sin. The Lord gave Apostle Peter a word of knowledge of what had transpired at Ananias and Sapphira's house. As spouses in a household, don't agree and compromise on any sinful act. It is better to agree to disagree as pertains to going against the will of the Lord. Don't just agree simply because you are one flesh when you got into marriage, or just for the sake of a cohesive environment, for it will cost you very dearly. So, stop being childish in your marriage, or else you will suffer the consequences such as that of the above two in the scripture. I finish with the scripture that we avoid hypocritical giving and try as much as possible to do what our heart tells us, what we have purposed.

Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Deuteronomy 23:18

The above scripture talks of money gotten from prostitution need not be given in the house of the Lord our God. Because all truth go hand in hand, it can be said as well that all ill-gotten money or property should not be given out in

house of the Lord as an offering of any kind. The list of ill-gotten/illegal incomes include some of the following: Liquor-making, tobacco-making, Bribery, Witchcraft, Robbery and stealing, Drug-trafficking, Human-trafficking, Racketeering, conning, Assassinating among many others. If the source of your possession is bad definitely your possession is equally bad and therefore ask yourself this question 'where do I get my income, what kind of activity am I involved in to get it?

Let me now come to another form of giving which is lending and we go through a few scriptures touching on the same.

Thou shalt not land upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury: Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

Deuteronomy 23:19-20

One should not lend for interest purposes to one you call a brother or a sister who is in the Lord. But one may lend to

any other person for interest as long as the person is not for instance say, a widow, an orphan or a poor.

If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

Exodus 22:25

Chapter 8

The Principle of Giving

There are some few principles of giving which need be taken into consideration as follows.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Galatians 6:6-7

It is true what you sow is what you will reap including in giving, as giving is considered as the act of sowing in a farm, which at the end of it you come out with a harvest which depends on what type of seed you planted. If you had sowed maize seeds, you will harvest maize and not any other. All deeds good or bad will result into something good or bad, compare the case of Abel (Hebrews 11:4). Look at the case of Cain what God told him (Genesis 4:1-12).

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men

give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered unto thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, who is this that forgiveth sins also?

And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Luke 7:36-50

The lesson we are getting there is that what we give to someone it determines how much we love the one to whom we are giving to. Ideally, we should give in love and not give without love – Agape love, that is, unconditional love which is that of our Creator God and which is pure love.

Every man according as he purposed his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

Galatians 6:7

From the foregoing you can see for yourself that if you want, give first and then expect to get. That goes well with the scripture in the book of Matthew- the golden rule (Matthew 7:12). In fact, by giving, you show out that you love and obey God. Surprisingly, it is only in giving that the Lord God has allowed you and me to test him, to see how faithful he is to us, as is recorded in the book of Malachi (Malachi 3:9-10). If you read in the book of Matthew (Matthew 4:6-9) The Lord Jesus in answering Satan said that we should not tempt/test God who is our Lord. So, why don't you and me take this only opportunity in the book of Malachi above and test the Lord God to our benefit! Also note that God does not test anybody as

explained in the epistle of James (James 1:12-15), and the only exception was in the case of Abraham (Genesis 22:1-3) on the issue of Abraham's faith in God and his love and obedience to him. So, we can only be tested by God only in giving, on other occasions, it can only be our self (the flesh) or the enemy. Other issues concerning giving you have read in chapter 6 in conditions in giving.

Please get to know that giving is also a gift from God as recorded in the Scripture in the epistle of Apostle Paul to the church in Rome (Romans 12:8) but that does not mean that if you don't have the gift then you can't give. As a fact, all can give including a widow, as we see recorded in the book of John Mark (Mark 12:41-44). The only thing in giving is that not all will give the same amount or quantity but will differ from an individual to another individual. If you are a child of God you will be a giver because your Father who is in heaven is a giver, so therefore, you have acquired the character of your Father (John 8:41-42). Giving should not appear to be a bother to any one, why? Because in giving you are beckoning for your blessing to come to you. I think there is not a single person that does not want to be blessed and giving is the only window to your blessing (Malachi 3:8-10). So, if you stop giving, you

have just closed the windows of your blessings. Giving is in two fronts, there is giving to God (to the work of God) in his house and giving to others (to those people who are in need) in the world.

Giving should be an enjoyable thing to do and also it should not be done discriminatively by giving only to one's members of the family, relatives and friends but should be extended to include even the strangers, regardless of their race or tribe. You can read what the Lord told his disciples on the issue of love (Matthew 5:46-48)

As true believers in Jesus Christ we need to be and must be better in all our ways compared to the non-believers (Matthew 5:20). True followers of Jesus Christ must be different by living an exemplary holy life (1 John 3:10, 1 Timothy 4:12).

Chapter 9

Results for not giving

There are consequences for not giving as we are going to see in the scriptures.

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Malachi 3:8-9

Well, it is that bad. You earn a curse (a financial curse) for robbing God by not paying your tithes and not giving offerings in the house of the Lord. It is unfortunate that many Christians in many churches don't pay their tithes and only concentrate in giving an offering only. A tithe is a debt one must pay to God on what he had blessed one with and it is not optional as some have taken it to be. A tithe is not much, it is only a small fraction (a tenth of your income). God is quite fair. In the country people are paying all sorts of taxes even more than the 10% God requires from us and mind you God is the source of everything as the Creator of heaven and earth and all that is therein. But please do get me right, it is scriptural for citizens of each country to pay their taxes to their Government, to enable it

to run/rule the country. It is up to the leaders in Government to see that it does not milk its citizens dry in collecting taxes from them. It must be fairly reasonable and secondly use it properly and be able to account for each cent spent. Now I believe nobody would be happy to have a curse (a financial curse) in one's life. Why? That curse will just give the enemy enough room to bring havoc in one's life. One will remain poor and eventually die in poverty and the vicious circle continues to the next generation if not remedied in true repentance and breaking of the curse and doing the needful by being faithful in serving the Lord with one's substances.

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?
And he said unto him, why, callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.
He saith unto him, which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt no commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false, witness,
honor thy father and thy mother: and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

The young man saith unto him, all these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: And come and follow me.

But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, who then can be saved?

But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, with men this is impossible: but with God all things are possible.

Matthew 19:16-26

From the above scripture you can see for yourself, that giving is good and it is a commandment of God and also contribute to one entering heaven. This young man after hearing what Jesus told him to also do-give to the poor, he went away sorrowful, why? He had a lot (great

possessions) which is not bad, but he had allowed the possessions to possess him and therefore he could not part with them an inch and that was how he lost entering the kingdom of God in heaven. He did not have the love of God in him to part with what he had, as many who are rich have said 'this wealth is mine which I received by my strength, I cannot just dish it out to anybody any how: The truth is that is only God that enabled him by his grace. (Deuteronomy 8:11-20). May the Lord help us not to idolize what the Lord has enabled us to possess, in Jesus' name, Amen. Now do you know one of the reasons why the Lord spoke to his disciples that way? Giving is part of righteousness before the Lord and surely it is impossible to be righteous by our own strength. We need God, for all things are possible with God. One must be born again to be in a position to pass the big test the young rich man failed in. The Scriptures say that it is not by might nor by strength but by God's spirit and that all things are possible to them that believe; believe in who? In Christ Jesus.

Let us look at some two scriptures that touches on righteousness.

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

Matthew 5:20

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

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

Revelation 19:7-8

All the above two scriptures are touching on one big thing called righteousness. Giving is a righteous deed just as many other godly deeds and without which one can miss entering heaven. It is part of righteousness required from God's children who are the wife (bride) of the Lamb of God (Jesus Christ).

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that with holdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

Proverbs 11:24

If you want poverty then keep on holding all that come to your possession to yourself. But if you want prosperity, be ready to be giving out from your possessions- It is that simple, my dear reader.

Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

Job 4:8

Refusing to give and always holding whatever you have is in the sight of God wickedness (sin) and there is nothing good you are going to get from such refusal. The scripture say it is more blessed to give than to receive. The opposite of a blessing is a curse. By holding to what you continue to receive, it will choke you and you will be drowned in it, therefore let go. Refusing to give is like one is telling God 'You have not blessed me with anything'.

Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

Proverbs 21:13

It goes without saying that it fulfills the scripture in the book of Matthew (Matthew 7:12)

There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.
But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.

Ecclesiastes 5:13-14

Keeping what you have say money and not giving out to the needy one day you will not have it and that will not profit you at all. Something bad can happen to you like some mysterious illness and all your riches end up in paying hospital bills and you come out a bankrupt person.

And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that E-li'-ashib did for To-bi'-ah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.
And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of To-bi'-ah out of the chamber.
Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense.
And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field. Then contended I

with the rulers, and said, why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries.

Nehemiah 13:7-12

Now look at the above scene in Jerusalem during Nehemiah's time. There was nothing in the house of the Lord and therefore the Levites and the singers had nothing for a living and each left the work of the Lord to go and try to do some other work to be able to earn a living abandoning God's work. Why? It seems nobody was giving something, a tithe, an offering in the house of God. It is bad, very bad indeed. If the people there had continued in that state, if Nehemiah had not come and brought normalcy in the house of God, the people would have lived under the curse of God.

As I said earlier, for a Christian to tithe is a must. Tithing is a covenant giving for those who have entered into a covenant with God through the blood of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ. That is why when you read even the Old Testament of the Bible you find God giving that command to the children of Israel. You can see also that Abraham and Jacob it is recorded in the Holy Scripture were

giving/paying their tithes as they had encountered God in their lives and had a personal relationship with him. The children of Israel God chose them by his love as his children and that is why he went ahead and gave them his instructions in a summary form in the Ten Commandments to obey just as a father can give his children instruction on how to conduct themselves in life. By refusing to tithe and thereby getting a financial curse you allow the following spirits to operate in you. The spirit of Theft, the spirit of Robbery, the spirit of Stealing, the spirit of Rebellion and the spirit of Poverty.

Now there are things that are gotten from God and there are things that are gotten from Satan. Those that are gotten from Satan come easily and quickly but are attached with a big bill to be paid (come at a high cost) and not free. Just as they have come quickly and easy, they also can slip out of one's hands easily and suddenly. Such things come from engaging in ill activities such as witchcraft, prostitution, rackets, stealing, bribery and many, many such ills and vices.

Now for those things that come from God most of the time come as a result of engaging in moral legal activities, by your sweat to get them, but it is worth it. Moreover, such

things will increase and also last and there are no hidden costs and no regrets. When someone receives something from God, know that he has opened a door of heaven for such a one and if is in a covenant relationship with God and goes ahead to pay tithe and give an offering, then the Lord will go ahead and even open the windows of heaven as well, so that one keeps on receiving even the more. Now let us go to the scriptures on what I have been saying on giving and also on how and from where we get things.

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labor shall increase.

Proverbs 13:11

Yes, wealth gotten in a disapproving way will surely fade away but that gotten rightly/honestly through labour will increase.

He that is greedy of gain troublest his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

Proverbs 15:27

It is true. Those that are greedy of gain bring no good thing to their households but a curse. But those who hate gifts shall live. Such greedy people are in the lot of those asking

or taking bribes and a good example you can find in our police force as well as in many other institutions in this country, not all but some who have corrupt heart and mind. I have visited many institutions and have witnessed how some staff have behaved. But you can live long by staying away from this vice.

Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.

Proverbs 16:8

That is the advice for those who want to be rich overnight dishonestly.

An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

Proverbs 20:21

That's it. Quick in acquiring may translate in quick in possessing a curse instead of a blessing.

The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.
The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse to do judgement.

Proverbs 21:6-7

Now I think here the scripture is talking of those conning others, whose work is useless as it can only lead to death if found out. It is equated to robbery (by the tongue) but without violence and can end in tragedy because the one doing it has failed to reason/check one's conscience. Let us go back to bribery.

For the LORD your God is God of gods, and the Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:
He doth execute the judgement of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

Deuteronomy 10:17-18

God is a God of justice and does not regard people by taking any reward from them but do only one thing - To bring justice to all.

Thou shalt not wrest judgement; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

That which is altogether just shall thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Deuteronomy 16:19-20

Many people have argued with me even when I was in formal employment that it is not sin to accept a gift from someone, after all you have not asked for it. Well, what many normally see as a gift is not truly a gift but an inducement which come camouflaged as a gift/a reward, to influence you to behave in some way by perverting justice. The prophet Elisha adamantly refused to take from Naaman the captain of the host of the king of Syria the so called "a blessing" (a gift) which was not an appreciation as many have believed but a bribe (2 Kings 5:15-16). Please just do what is altogether just before the Lord God and enter heaven and stop being blinded and become a fool. We Christians are heaven bound and must endeavor to live right.

Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

Ecclesiastes 7:7

Yes, when you take a gift (bribe) you do very silly things like a mad person and further have your heart destroyed. As for me, I don't want my heart to be destroyed for then I would be finished. (Proverbs 4:23) I want to live long and share the gospel of Jesus Christ and have a good ending-which counts the most. Let me now touch other areas as well.

Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.

Leviticus 19:11

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,
Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.
For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Deuteronomy 18:10-12

There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel.

Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Deuteronomy 23:17-18

AND it come to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jez'-reel-ite had a vineyard, which was in Jez'-reel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of
Sa-mar'-i-a.

And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.

And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jez'-reel-ite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

But Jez'-e-bel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?

And he said unto her, because I spake unto Naboth the Jez'-reel-ite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money, or else if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.

And Jez'-e-bel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jez'-reel-ite.

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth.

And she wrote in the letters, saying, proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people:

And set two men, sons of Be'-li-al, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die.

And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jez'-e-bel had sent

unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them.

They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

And there came in two men, children of Be'-li-al, witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king.

Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

Then they sent to Jez'-e-bel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

And it came to pass, when Jez'-e-bel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jez'-e-bel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jez'-ree-ite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jez'-ree-ite, to take possession of it.

And the word of the LORD came to E-li'-jah the tish-bite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which

is in Sa-mar'-i-a: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it.

And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

And Ahab said to E-li'-jah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD.

Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy prosperity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel,

And will make thine house like the house of Jer-o-bo'-am the son of Ne'-bat, and like the house of Ba'-ash-a the son of A-hi'-jah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin.

And of Jez'-e-bel also spake the LORD, saying, the dogs shall eat Jez'-e-bel by the way of Jez'-reel.

1 Kings 21:1-23

That was quite a story with a big lesson on the consequences of acquiring possessions by dishonest means. Surely you must be punished by the Lord God, no matter

your position in the society. Leaders must watch out on how they conduct themselves before those they lead and must not abuse the authority bestowed on them. King Ahab should not have behaved that way as by not having possession of Naboth's vineyard could not have removed him from kingship and he seemed to have been careless to have his seal where others including member of his family could get and do mischief as Jezebel did. Moreover, when he received word that Naboth was dead he didn't bother even to send condolence or know what killed him but was instead quick to go down and possess Naboth's vineyard, yet he was not part of Naboth's family! As to inherit it. No wonder God told him through his prophet that he had killed and now wanted to take possession, how true- he wanted the vineyard so badly and was happy to hear of Naboth's death, 'Ooh, at long last I am going to possess thing vineyard ' (he must have foolishly thought), But God neither slumbers nor sleeps 24/7. King Ahab and his wicked wife all were judged, just as Adam and Eve, Ananiah and Sapphira were judged, God never changes, we need be very careful in life.

Let me now end this discussion by going to a few Scriptures touching on things we receive from God.

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Genesis 3:19

From the beginning, we find that man had to sweat (labour) to earn a living so there is no short cut but put your hands to work to do honest work and receive God's approval and blessing.

But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 8:18

As we continue to receive from God after laboring in our farms, employment or business, let us also remember God our Creator for he is the one who in the first place gives us the strength to be able to work.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of

heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:10

Now mark this word-pour. God will not just give out but pour, as he has much in his custody.

The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Proverbs 10:22

Just as I said earlier, the things (blessing) you receive from God are not packaged with sorrow. Therefore, no regrets.
As for Devil worshippers/Satanists, whatever they receive from Satan they will dearly pay for it with a lot of regrets and do you know? The Devil will have them back and you remain miserable, very miserable indeed because in the end you will accompany him to hell.

Chapter 10

Example of Givers

Concerning examples of those who gave, we do have many in the scriptures but here I am going to give just some few examples which I do straight away.

AND Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.
And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was tiller of the ground.
And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.
And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and his offering.
But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

Genesis 4:1-5

In the above scripture we find that God accepted Abel and his offering and not Cain and his offering because Abel gave with understanding (Leviticus 4:27-35). In chapter 3 we find that his parents had sinned and were impenitent

(Genesis 3:1-13) but as for him he was consciously being penitent (Hebrews 9:19-28) and did what Christ was going to do to bring reconciliation between God the Father and the fallen man by giving his life on the cross (Isaiah 53:1-6).

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

Hebrews 11:4

The sacrifice Abel gave to God was more excellent comparable to Cain's and God counted Abel as righteous moreover, although Abel had died but his gift, still speak on his behalf before God, how wonderful. A giver he was indeed.

And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mam'-re, the Am'-o-rite, brother of Esh'-col, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram.

And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.

And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Ho'-bah which is on the left hand of Damascus.

And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Ched-or-la-o'mer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Sha'-veh, which is the king's dale.

And Mel-chiz'-ed-ek king of Sa'-lem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most High God.

And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

And blessed be the most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

Genesis 14:13-20

Here we see how Abram gave all his tithes to Melchizedek the king of Salem.

AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Mo-ri'-ah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Genesis 22:1-3

Here we find Abraham given the test of all his life. He was told to go and offer his only son Isaac for a burnt offering and although he loved his son so much, he went ahead to go and do what he was told first thing the next day. It was a prelude/a shadow of Christ Jesus sacrifice by God on the cross at Calvary for the redemption of mankind.

You can read also Genesis 13:1-2; 15:1-15; 22:4-18; 18:1-14; 24:1, 33-35 and 25:7.

AND Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the LORD his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly.

Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel, the chief of the fathers.

So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gib'-eon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness.

But the ark of God had David brought up from Kir'-jath-je'-a-rim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.

Moreover the brazen altar, that Bez'-a-leel the son of U'-ri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the LORD: and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it.

And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the LORD, which was at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offerings offered a thousand burnt upon it.

In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.

And Solomon said unto God,

Thou hast showed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead.

Now, O LORD God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude.

Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great

And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thy heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

Then Solomon came from his journey to the high place that was at Gib'-eon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and reigned over Israel.

And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand

horsemen, which he placed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

And the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycamore trees that are in the vale for abundance.

And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

And they fetched up, and brought forth out of Egypt a chariot for six hundred shek'-els of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty: and so brought they out horses for all the kings of the Hit'-tites, and for the kings of Syria, by their means.

2 Chronicles 1

You can also read 2 Chronicles 8 and 9 respectively.

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tab'-itha, which by interpretation is called Dorcus: This woman was full of good works and alms deeds which she did.

And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

And forasmuch as Lyd'-da was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcus made, while she was with them.

But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed: and turning him to the body said, Tab'-itha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

Acts 9:36-42

This was quite a wonder indeed. It was just like the case of Lazarus who was dead four days before and Jesus came and ordered him out of the grave and he lived. Lord Jesus, let it be repeated again and again in this time of the end, for the glory of your holy name and many be converted back to you, Amen.

I find that good works in the Lord is most beneficial. Dorcus who died was brought back to life by the Lord who had her records of good deeds done by her. So it is good to die in the Lord having done good deeds in the name of the Lord (Revelation 14:13)

THERE was a certain man in Cae-sa-re'-a called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,
A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.
He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.
And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, what is it, Lord?
And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.
And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter.
He lodged with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;
And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

Acts 10: 1-8

Now here we find yet another giver only that he was not yet a Christian, just as the people Apostle Paul met at Athens where he saw an altar inscribed 'TO THE UNKNOWN GOD' and the apostle expounded on them on the true God. The same to the Israelites whom he desired and prayed that they might be saved as they had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Cornelius definitely had a zeal for God but did not know God personally and God saw this fact and sent an angel to tell him what to do so as to be reconciled back to God and to have a personal relationship with him, hence the angel told him to send for Simon Peter who would deliver the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ for his salvation, just as apostle Paul went further and explained to the Israelites what they needed to do to be saved and avoid remaining just religious (Romans 10:1-13).

Notes to the reader

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