

CONTENTS ON SOMETHING IS WRONG

**DEDICATION TO VICTIMS OF WRONGNESS AND THOSE WHO ARE OUT
TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT**

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ABOUT THE BOOK :Something is wrong is a socio-religious literature which exposes the evils and wrongs in our society occasioned by some natural and human factors. There are always reasons why things go wrong. When people come to leadership with selfish intentions and without mission, no manifesto and no plan to show to the people that

they have what it takes to serve many things can be wrong. When something goes wrong many other things could be adversely affected including loss of lives and properties. That things have gone wrong does not mean that all hopes have gone and that there cannot be right. It could be wrong for it to be right depending on those who are involved. When things are wrong, those that are involved may have what it takes to avert the situation. Note, those who are the cause of problems anywhere should know that they are not free but under the divine watchful eyes of the Almighty God.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I sincerely give all glory and honor to the Almighty God for His immense grace upon us in His vineyard and the burden and time He has given to me to brood on such a socio-religious literature of this nature. I appreciate the various agencies of information: News papers, mass media, interviews etc, which have helped us to write this book. Special appreciation goes to Dr and Mrs. Eyakop-permanent secretary Economic Development, Mrs Cecilia Inyang-permanent secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Mrs Ikemesit Ekpo-permanent secretary Civil Service Commission, Uyo, pastor Bassey Umoh-Auditor General for Local Government, Elder and Mrs Nse Ekefre-permanent secretary Youth and Sports, Akwa Ibom State for their supports, Dr and Mrs Etop Akwang, Professor and Dr (Mrs) Effiong Johnson of the university of Uyo all in Akwa Ibom State for both editing and writing the forward of this book.. My son Mfonobong Godwin Akpabio who not only helped in typing the scripts but also published this book. My heartfelt gratitude goes to my loving wife who contributed and

seriously encouraged me not to delay in publishing this book. Rev and pastor (Mrs). Awazie, ,Evangelist and Mrs. Sunday Ekanem all of Surulere Church Lagos for their prayers for us. I also appreciate all the committee members of Assemblies of God, Oruko and the entire pastoral staff and section for giving me the enabling environment to come up with this piece of writing. Rev Dr E. Isangidihe-retired general council treasurer. I will never forget my District superintendent Rev A Nduonyi and all the presbyters, Rev Dr and Pastor Mrs. G Amaowoh, Rev Dr Chidi Okarafor, Rev Dr.Alaje and Rev pastor Ejikeme Ejim of the General Council of the Assemblies of God Nigeria for their encouragement to me. Rev Dr A. Edem of the Assemblies of God Bible College, Uyo and all the tutorial staff. May God change the stories of all the readers of this digest in Jesus name. Amen.

Content of the Book

In life, these two opposites are common, “Right and Wrong”. One may have one in isolation of the other or the two variables can jointly exist in an ideal situation. Something can be right when something is correct and good whereas something can be wrong when something is not correct and going in the wrong direction or being mistaken. It could be an evil against moral standard in showing favoritism to people because of their race or colour. Wrongness could also imply to not having the suitable person for the job. Something can also be wrong in a disorderly situation as in working condition.

When something is wrong, it is wrong in all ramifications. Let’s face the truth so as to make amends. God rebuked the false prophets for saying peace, when there was indeed no peace rather wickedness (Jeremiah 6: 13-14).

The underscored definitions reveal that things can go wrong in a diversity of ways. My understanding is that it takes pains and discipline to maintain what is good or correct but easy to do what is wrong or evil.

A child frowned his face. His mother saw it and asked him what the matter was? His reply was, “I have not seen where I kept my 100.00 naira”

Where things go wrong many other things can be affected including loss of lives and properties. Some people are frowned at while some applaud those who may want to get advantage of the situation to exhibit their selves’ interest and ego.

Everybody has what to do or contribute to avert a problem or a crisis situation beginning from the grass root. You will find out that you have what it takes to be in charge of any situation if you should look inward and refuse to look around aimlessly and helplessly for endless solution.

Note, those who are the cause of troubles in any system should know that they are not free from the eyes of the Almighty God-the great Judge- though they may seem to be free from the eyes of the ordinary man.

WHEN DO THINGS GO WRONG?

The scripture says, “You hate the one who reproves in court and despise him who tells the truth. You trample on the poor and force him to give you grain. Therefore, though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them; though you have planted lush vineyards, you will not drink their vine. For I know how many are your offenses and how great your sins. You oppress the righteous and take bribes and you deprive the poor of justice in the courts. Therefore the prudent man keeps quiet for the times are evil” (Amos 5 :10- 13 NIV).

Nobody would want to be told that something is wrong in our nation and in every nook and cranny when evils : injustices, threats, insecurity, bombing, killing, maiming, ritual activities, raping, insurgent’s attack- admits abduction of innocent people- Chibok girls, by the Boko Haram group thus resulting to gross human rights violation. Atrocities of various dimensions: thugery, assassination, kidnapping are on the increase every day and are happening before our very eyes.

Today, and in many parts of the country peoples’ lives are in danger; even when one successfully goes out and comes home, life is still

uncertain, calamity may still take its turn and strike at the very home to render one vulnerable when one thinks he is secured. Something is wrong!

Farm lands, business premises, offices, church gatherings schools and other socials gatherings are not safe from insurgent attacks and bombings. Something is wrong when some people in a bid to prove that they have been systematically marginalized and deprived of certain legitimate rights refuse to use dialogue or proper litigation order but choose rather a wrong way- kidnapping and demanding for ransom- as a way for compensation or mitigation. Is this the best way of getting things right?

Something is wrong in a system or policy if after an electioneering, and people have given their votes and mandates to their respected candidates as the peoples' representatives and the deal has been done; many easily forget to implement on the existing policy but go about manufacturing their secret agenda of enriching themselves alone.

Something is wrong if election is nothing else but a do or die affair, a-winner-takes-all and a-looser-loose-all syndrome.

Something is wrong when the rich goes on becoming richer while the poor becomes poorer. The cry of the poor over suppression by the rich and the yearnings of the masses are making rivers of tears before God every day because something is wrong.

Plausible pretention easily becomes the order of the day. Siphoning of money, embezzlement and mistrust become inherent, because something is wrong. Something is wrong when some youth who are supposed to be trained and shown the right path to leadership are

misled and used as thugs and threats to silence opposition. Some people are purposefully out to sponsor the killing of other fellow human beings and spilling their blood for empty gain without looking back or thinking of consequences. When you kill others, who will celebrate you?

Something is wrong when insecurity has become a global trend and phenomenon with particular reference to sub-saharan West Africa and Nigeria. The heinous attack of Ebola virus-an instant killer, a separatist that stigmatizes between family members, friends and fellow humans, HIV and AIDS, these twin killers have become endemic scourges to humanity. Is the world safe from God's curse?

Something is wrong when some children nowadays have no time for God other than watch films and brows internet. Some are so disobedient to parents and without regard to elders that they exhibit all types of mannerisms and decadences in and out of the home.

Something is wrong when homosexuality and lesbianism- the sin that caused God to judge the city of Sodom and Gomorrah in a sweep of divine wrath in Genesis 18:16-22-have become secret lifestyle nowadays in schools, colleges and campuses among our children. This is a dishonor to humanity and abomination to the God Almighty. If the same sex animals which we know are low in intelligence cannot go to the same sex animals for mating, how could a higher being like man who is the crown of God's creation do this? Is this not changing and reducing God's glory to man according to Romans 1:18-32? This is an unpalatable story in the history of man.

Something is wrong with a marriage which was joined in love, but without harmony is at the verge of being broken. Something is wrong in

a church where people are expected to give their worship to God in a peaceful atmosphere, instead there is rancor, fighting, quarrelling while confusion becomes the case. A system that has no direction is heading towards anarchy and possible extinction.

Something is wrong when the altars of offerings, prayer and sacrifice of praise and true worship to God have become altars of sinning-platforms and synagogues of Satan where all manners of diabolical displays: spell, charm, hypnotism, mysticism masquerades, special or holy oil rather than the Holy Spirit and falsehood are going on.

Something is wrong when Church leadership has now become like worldly where politicking and all manner of sentiments are going on. Many are trained not to speak out when things are going wrong. Something is wrong when many have left the word of God and are serving tables. Apostle Peter said, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:2-4KJV).

Most people develop their minds for good while some use theirs for wickedness. Look at the hidden operation of babies' factories for ritual and other diabolical purposes.

The entertainment industry has its own side of the trouble when some do not stay within the bounds of pure entertainment but have gone beyond to seducing and engaging in immorality and Satanist activities thereby bringing disrepute to the industry.

When students, civil servants and highly acclaimed professionals, decide to go on strike, rampage and wanton destruction of properties, something is wrong. When those who make policies cannot implement

on the policies to better the lives of those affected by such policies, something is wrong.

Why do we witness a lot of terrible things that are happening today? Such things that were unheard of, alarming and most frightening as there are- something is wrong somewhere. Let him who reads it understand.

Who had thought that Nigeria would be shading blood today as if we were fighting a civil war? Families have been displaced and deprived of loved family members. Churches and gatherings of God's worshippers, students in schools have been bombed, attacked and killed on mere religious ignorance and at an alarming rate. Some are deluded to say that killing others is a way of checking a bloated population. You may be wrong, something is wrong somewhere. This development is unparalleled in our history and has become both national and international challenge.

The disruptions in climate condition resulting to flooding, earthquakes, hurricane partly from climate change and other natural activities brought about by man occurring at increasing intensity and incurring unimaginable devastation to humanity.

Money is tight, inflation is a worldwide problem. Bribery and corruption has eaten into all the fabrics and sectors of every system.

The society has degenerated to a level where "sexual abuse" (both in male and female counterparts) has become a criteria for securing employment. This is an abuse of human right.

Though we have accepted the country's GDP-gross domestic product- as growing, yet, poverty is biting everywhere, the deplorable condition

of our roads network is telling on us that something is wrong somewhere.

Just as iron and clay cannot mix, our world is incapable of uniting as one nation and people. The division and conflict foreshadowed by Nebuchadnezzar's dream in (Daniel 2) resists human attempt to bring lasting peace. Cultures are in conflict, nations are engaged in civil wars and wars with other nations, struggles and tensions exist between social and economic groups. Still, the world cries out for peace- something is wrong.

To the terrorists and the assassins, note this, "One who puts on his armor should not boast like one who takes it off" (1Kings20:11).

WHY DO THINGS GO WRONG?

"Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? Does a lion roar in the thicket when he has no prey? Does he growl in his den when he has caught nothing? Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground where no snare has been set? Does a trap spring up from the earth when there is nothing to catch?"(Amos 3 :3-5 NIV).

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold"(Matthew 24:12KJV).

Many things can be wrong for several reasons:

LACK OF MISSION

It takes a man of mission to be mission minded. Mission by implication is a particular work that one feels it is his duty to do for having been in an office, position, business and others. Without mission, there is no commission and without commission, there is no commitment. God's mission to the world for sending his son was to save the world from sin through the death of His only son. "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 3:16KJV).

This mission of God to humanity was commissioned through Christ to few negligible minority of the disciples and committed to all true believers who go about everywhere to do the work of reconciling the world to God (Mark 15:16).

God is using all true believers to do the end time work of turning the heart of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just and to make ready a people prepared for the LORD (Luke 1 13- 17). This mission will be consummated at the advent of our LORD Jesus Christ.

Why do people have the satisfaction of coming to position(s) or an office without a sense of mission? It is mission that should be the motivating factor or purpose for accepting any service. Where this is not there something must surely go wrong.

WITHOUT VISSION

Vision brings to play the special ability to see, having an imaginative picture of what to do. "Where there is no vision the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18). Imagination as a product of vision is the "mind or the act or power to form a mental image of something not present to the

senses (sight, smell, touch, etc) or not previously known or experienced.”

JOHN MASEFIELD said, “Man’s body is faulty, his mind is untrustworthy, but his imagination has made him remarkable”.

Dugald Stewart, said, “The faculty of imagination is a great spring of human activity, and the principal source of human development. As it delights in presenting to the mind senses and characters more perfect than those which we are acquainted with, it prevents us from ever being completely satisfied with present condition and with our past attainments and engages us continually in the pursuit of some untried enjoyment or some ideal excellence. Destroy this faculty and the condition of man will become as stationary as that of the brutes.”

Mack R Douglas said, “Vivid imagination hunts for the ideal solution to life’s problems and goals and then a dynamic imagination has the power to change what is found, to sift the information and bring the best results. We act, or fail to act not because of will as is commonly believed but because of imagination”

Some notable quotes on imagination by eminent Scholars

“Imagination rules the world.”-Napoleon.

“Imagination is more important than knowledge”-Albert Einstein.

“Imagination makes man the master of animals.”- Shakespeare.

“Imagination governs the world.”- Disraeli.

A leadership or government that brings her imagination to play will make attractive and impressive progress to the people. This is no doubt

witnessed in the level of infrastructure and human development in a system.

NO MANIFESTO

This is a written statement in which a group of people especially a political party, explains their beliefs and say what they will do if they win an election as party manifesto. The late president, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and the vice- president- Good luck Jonathan came up with a seven-points- agenda of transformation which was meant to act as a guide in their bid to perform. At the exit of the president Umaru Musa Yar' Adua, Jonathan became the president. He held strictly to the tenets of the already existed manifesto to implement upon that which they had planned to achieve for the people who elected them. Kudos to ex-governors –Wing Commander Idongesit Nkanga, late Chief Akpan Isemin, Obong Victor Attar-Advocate of Resource Control- and our digital, transforming governor Chief Dr. Godswill Obot Akpabio for their unflinching efforts to transform Akwa Ibom state to an enviable destination.

Human beings are prone to believe so much on what they can see as proofs for doing anything. What package you have as proof to convince and move the people to follow you matters a lot. Gone are the days when people were moved to act by mere sentiment without substantial evidence. These days it is more of what you have and can offer for the people and not so much what you can talk. It is more in action than in a mouthful of words.

Some people or organizations who have no manifesto, no defined policy to the people may have nothing to prove to the people that they have what to offer. Such people will not have any impressive

achievement than to be mouthy and deprive the people of their legitimate rights. With such, people will frown because something will be wrong in such a system.

NO PLAN

In life, if one does not plan to succeed he plans to fail. One's plan reveals who he is and where he is going. Our plans have to be synonymous with God's will in our lives.

"There is no wisdom, no insight, and no plan that can succeed against the LORD. The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the LORD." (Proverbs 21: 30-31NIV).

A plan is something that one intends to do or achieve or a set of things to do in order to achieve something.

Daniel Hudson Burnham said, "Make big plan, Aim high and hope and work, remembering that a noble logical diagram once recoded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever- growing insistency. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us."

Have a plan for today and for tomorrow. Have a functional future plan that will tell on the succeeding generations. Big faith in God should go with good big plans. Our Almighty God is glorified with our big plans because He a big God. He told the children of Israel "I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it"(Psalm 81:10KJV). Wake up first in the morning with a plan of being in God's presence for divine direction and

guidance. It is wisdom and integrity to do anything with plan. Plan about everything in life.

A system without plan has no focus and a plan that has no set goals lacks motivation and group activities.

WITHOUT PURPOSE:

A purpose is an intention or plan, a reason for an action. Any purpose must always be to take care of an available need. A purpose driven life does not consider distractions but regards them as stepping stones to victory. One's purpose in life is his focus, passion and desire and until he achieves it, he will not rest, every other thing is secondary. A purpose minded person is always in for result than merely occupying a position or an office. Something is wrong when one comes into a system without declaring his intention and pursuing it with all exuberance and the energy given to him by God Almighty. The Apostle Paul could say, "Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14 NIV). Mack R. Douglas said, "In establishing high purpose you must find a great human need, find the answer to fill that need, and burn all your bridges behind you taking the answer of that need through a channel of service to the people who need it"

One of the real fallacies of our day is the popular notion that happiness depends on external circumstances and surroundings. There is no question that our internal moods are coloured by external situations, but real personal joy comes from internal convictions, determined by character that is the direct result of high purpose."

Carlyle has said, "A man with a half volition goes backwards and forwards, and makes no way on the smoothest road; a man with a whole volition advances on the roughest, and will reach his purpose if there be even a little worthiness in it

The man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder- a waif, a nothing, a no man. Have a purpose in life and having it, throw such strength and muscle into your work as God has given you."

The man with purpose does not sit back waiting for Dame Fortune to appear, but rather, he will take every opportunity and use it to the good of others and to his own advancement."

NO PROPER ATTITUDE:

"Do you see a man skilled in his works? He will serve before kings; He will not serve before obscure men." (Proverbs 22:29 NIV).

Attitude is more than work, attainment or achievement in life! Without the right or proper attitude, one's good effort or endeavor could be marred. A good and proper attitude is a blender and qualifier to whatever one is out for in life.

Attitude is simply a manner of acting that shows one's inward thoughts and feelings. That friendly and deep concern for others-without any iota of selfishness or segregation, as exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ at the cross for humanity (Philippians 2:5-8). He actually showed this by His death for sinful men. This is a deep-rooted concern for others.

How are our attitudes towards others? It takes the right attitude for a great and exalted one to humble and to consider himself as nothing. Of

course, one has no power to make himself what he is in life, except by the grace of God.

But can people learn from this and become humble? If you do not get any other thing in life, get the right attitude and you will never regret you did.

Proper attitude to oneself, to others and to work and governance is demanded in leadership. Patriotism should be a key factor in attitude re-orientation.

Do you know that our attitudes determine our altitude?

“Mack R. Douglas said, your success is determined by your attitude.

The fruits of success- of achievement, peace, exhilarating keen competition, etc- will not be yours unless your view toward your desire, achievement is right. There must be an inner satisfaction that what you are doing is what you should be doing, that you are doing what you can and all you can. This then helps to motivate you. Your attitude determines your action.”

WITHOUT ACTION

Faith without work is dead James 2:17. Faith is work or action oriented.

Action requires courage. But action also develops courage.

“George Clemenceau said, “A man who likes to be convinced to act before he acts is not a man of action. Do you see the tennis player before returning the ball begins to question himself as to the physical and moral value of himself? You must act just as you breathe.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., said, "Life is action and passion; therefore, it is required of a man that he should share the passion and action of his time at the peril of being judged not to have lived."

An action leader is the peoples' leader. It is action that the people need than a mouthful of unfulfilled promises. Love and passion for the people should be seen or witnessed in people-oriented and transforming programs.

POOR MANAGEMENT CONTROL AND ARRANGEMENT

I listened with pity and concern to a group of ministers-pastors-as they were lamenting and groaning in pains and sufferings in one of their prayer retreats. After many years of their existence as a denomination, the leadership was unable to put up tangible structures for accommodation to better the lot of these ministers. They were so discouraged they decided to leave the prayer program before time due to inconvenience. They all left home with bitter hearts and feelings.

Money was flowing but without proper management, something was wrong somewhere.

Management simply means the art of running and controlling a business or similar organization; it could also refer to the art or skill of dealing with people or situations in a successful way. It is management that makes a responsible leadership. Where the art to run or control organization and skill to deal with people or situations are lacking, the people will frown because something has gone wrong. The effect of this could be felt everywhere in the system.

Leadership demands the art and skill of management in any system. Taking care of people and situations matters a lot in management and is demanded everywhere beginning from the home.

In management, accountability preserves the integrity and honor of a leader or leadership who has been chosen or elected by the people and entrusted with money and other responsibility

DISOBEDIENCE

Outright disobedience to a constituted authority can cause a lot of things to go wrong in a system. Disobedience can be manifested in several ways from the sweeper to the speaker. It manifests itself in pride, rebellious and stubborn spirit among children especially the youth. This is evidenced in the apostle Paul's statement as the signs of the end time (2Timothy3:1-7). They feel they know better than their parents but will in the near future attribute their misfortunes to the innocent parents who had warned them.

This was the case when God sent Prophet Jonah to Nineveh on a rescue mission. Jonah's blatant refusal to go to Nineveh on God's command to preach against its sinfulness, but decided rather to run to somewhere, could have resulted in the loss of lives of those on board the ship.

"The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai : "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me." But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that part. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish

to flee from the LORD. Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep”(Jonah1:1-5NIV).

It is funny each time I read the book of Jonah to see what prophet Jonah devised against the Almighty God as a child plays hide and seek with the parents. A tested and trusted prophet of God who had experienced God in all ramifications and found him faithful could behave funny. Human beings, even the most spirited are prone to exhibit some natural feelings to show that they are humans and not God.

Some people or criminals are mistaken in their attempt to escape from their countries to other countries after having been convicted of one crime or the other.

An attempt to escape from the eyes of man does not mean one will also run away from the watchful eyes of the all-seeing God. There must always be a play back event in peoples' lives in this life. God knows how to bring people to account for their sins. Why was prophet Jonah against the repentance of the people of Nineveh and considered the option of running as the best thing to do? Where was the love, passion and compassion for souls from him as God's prophet?

He went below deck and fell into a deep sleep, was that a deep –good sleep?

Some are having such deep sleep of disobedience and negligence while others are languishing in sorrows and pains, being tossed by the violent storms of life they have caused and are not moved. Others have tied down the progress of others and are sitting on them to enrich themselves.

While others were calling on their gods, prophet Jonah was having a deep sleep.

Trouble makers have no time for prayer because they know their fate.

Will the almighty God keep quiet and allow them to go free? The future and time will tell the truth.

DO NOT SPARE A TROUBLE MAKER IN A SYSTEM

“The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up and call on your God! May be he will take notice of us, and we will not perish.” Then the sailors said to each other, Come, let us cast lot to find out who is responsible for this calamity,” They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. So they asked him, “Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?” He answered,

“I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land. This terrified them and they asked, “What have you done?” (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.) The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, “What should we do to you to make the sea calm

for us?” “Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.” Instead the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. Then they cried to the LORD, “O LORD, please do not let us die for taking his man’s life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O LORD has done as you pleased.” Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him. But the LORD provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.” (Jonah 1:6-17 – NIV).

Jonah might be troubling a system that is perpetually threatened by attacks of various magnitudes and until Jonah is removed problems will continue to linger.

We need leaders who will not spare the sacred cows, those who are of the royal descent and the king makers who pretend not to see or feel the pains of the suffering people but go to deep sleep of disobedience, negligence and suppression.

If a pagan captain could be so concerned for everyone on board, God will not forgive any leader who is chosen by the votes of the people or by unanimous decision, and more importantly, servants of God who should be on a rescue mission to serve. If we see things that are going wrong and still keep quiet while the wind and storm continue to rage the people on board- the church, nation and surrounding, God will hold us responsible. You were chosen as a captain and leader of the people to speak for the people and act where necessary.

May God forgive those who are satisfied in sparing Jonah while the ship or system goes unabated with the raging storms of bombing, insecurity, threats of lives of innocent souls. May the raging sea of God not allow every Jonah in the family, church and office who feel he is sleeping while people have thrown away their properties to the sea of insurgent attack and missed their loved family members.

Jonah said, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he replied, "and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you."

Jonah confessed when he saw the trouble he brought to those on board the ship by his disobedience to God and told them what to do to bring peace and calmness to the sea. Most trouble makers would not like to confess or apologize to save the situation or system from collapsing. God saw Prophet Jonah's submission and provided the big fish for his rescue.

I like some leaders who resign from the office to make way for peace. Nelson Mandela put his life in his hand and liberated his people from slavery yet when it was his time to rule, he ruled only a short time but gave chance for others to experience the mastery of leadership.

SELFISHNESS:

A selfish person is concerned first with his own advantage without care for others.

When people come to leadership with selfish agenda without the mind to serve the people, something must definitely be wrong. If it is

directed towards the poor, the outcome will be alarming. It would not be anything for a selfish man to manipulate and falsify facts or information against the poor to fulfill his evil intent.

THE FALSE WITNESS AGAINST NABOTH

“There was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace, in exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth. But 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 Jezreelite 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 Jezebel 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 Jezreelite, 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 Jezebel 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 Jezreelite. 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 Belial, 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 Jezebel 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 Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial 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 Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.” (1Kings 21:1-14KJV).

You can think twice about what befell Naboth. Do we not have many false witnesses hired to stand in court to defend the rich today? Are you surprised that Naboth was not even given the opportunity to defend the allegations leveled against him? The crowd just took him away and stoned to death, on the account of scoundrels:

They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people, then two scoundrels came and sat opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, “Naboth has cursed both God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death.

Were they right? Do you know what happened after that? The crowd that witnessed the kangaroo court judgment went about telling others how Naboth cursed both God and the king. Before you run around with

news of what the other person has done, make sure you are bearing the truth. You cannot spread rumor based on “hear –say” and expect to be free. Why not follow James’ advice?

“My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.” (James 1:19).

WHEN MAJORITY ENGAGE EVIL REPORT

We are in an era when the popular saying, “Majority carries the votes” has so been accepted as a norm and a democratic principle. Many things go wrong when some pretending humans hide in this pretext to vent their havoc to the people without a second thought.

The band wagon to follow the majority as long as they succeed or have their way without knowing how, could be misleading. That many have a –near-success sign

could mean something else from the normal way of success.

Faith and courage were the Christian virtues that God’s People needed to exercise to be able to disposes their enemies to poses their possession, yet something was wrong.

The twelve that were sent to spy the land

When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, “Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwallled or fortified? How is the soil? Is it

fertile or poor? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruits of the land.”(It was the season for the first ripe grapes). So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin, as far as Rehob, towards Lebo Hamath. They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, lived. (Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt). When they reached the Valley of Eshcol, they cut off the branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. That place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there. At the end of forty days, they returned from exploring the land. (Numbers 13:17-25).

At Kadesh-Barnea, on the border of Canaan, the people of Israel foolishly forfeited their opportunity to enter the Promised Land and claim their inheritance. This tragic failure has made the name “Kadesh,” a synonym for defeat and lost opportunity. Israel’s downfall at Kadesh is a reminder to us today that it’s a dangerous thing to trifle with the will of God. You may end up spending the rest of your life wandering around, just waiting to die.

In spite of what some of our hymns declare, Canaan is not a picture of heaven. Certainly, there won’t be any battles in heaven! Rather, Canaan is a picture of the inheritance God has planned for each of His children today, the work He wants us to do, and the places He wants us to occupy. Paul called it “good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10 – NIV). The Lord has a perfect plan for each of His children, but we can claim these blessings only by faith and obedience.

Like the people of Israel – centuries ago, many believers today walk by sight and not by faith, and therefore they fail to enjoy the good things God has for them. They can't say with David, "The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; yes, I have a good inheritance." (Psalms 16:6 – NKJV). What did Israel do at Kadesh that brought about their shameful defeat? They committed at least five blatant sins, and God's children today can commit those same sins and suffer the same kind of shameful defeat.

The report of the spies

They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan." Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it." But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak came from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them." That night, all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites

grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?" And they said to each other, "We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt." (Numbers 13:26 to last; 14:4).

Someone has defined a committee as "a group of people who individually can do nothing and collectively decide nothing can be done." Because they lacked faith, all the spies, except Caleb and Joshua were discouraged at the prospect of entering the land and fighting the enemy, and their discouragements quickly spread throughout the camp. Doubt had turned into unbelief, and unbelief is rebellion against God. (Numbers 14:9; Hebrews 3:16-19).

It's interesting how the ten spies identified Canaan as "the land to which you sent us" (Numbers 13:27), and "the land through which we have gone" (v. 32), but not as "the land the Lord our God is giving us." Because these ten men were walking by sight, they didn't really believe God's promises. They looked at the people of the land and saw giants; they looked at the Canaanite cities and saw high walls and locked gates; and they looked at themselves and saw grasshoppers... If only they had looked by faith to God, they would have seen the one who is able to conquer every enemy and who sees the nations of the world as grasshoppers (Isaiah 40:22). "We are not able" is the cry of unbelief (Numbers 13:31), but, "our God is able" is the affirmation of faith (Daniel 3:17; see Philippians 4:13). What John Gardner said about the political arena can be applied to the spiritual arena and Christian's walk of faith: "We are continually faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems." A faith that can't be tested

can't be trusted, and God tests our faith to help us make sure it's genuine (1 Peter 1:1-9), and to help make it grow. "Faith comes first to the hearing ear," said A. W. Tozer, "not the cogitating mind." "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17 – NKJV).

To the unbelieving world, it's unreasonable for anybody to trust a God they've never seen or heard, but we have all the evidence we need to convince us that God is dependable and has the power to accomplish what He say He will do. What He promises, He is able to perform (Romans 4:21).

Israel had seen what the Lord did to the Egyptians and the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-16), and they had every assurance that He would never fail His people. Something was wrong. (From The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament © 2001 – 2004 by Warren W. Wiershe).

The report was terribly discouraging. It melted the heart of the people.

SUSPICION

It is not bad to show sympathy. Today, many have capitalized on such openness to do all sorts of evils, they have duped, harmed and killed those who show kindness to them.

Elders and nobles are meant to be the custodians of wisdom and should be consulted in times of problems for help, but more often than not, this is not the case.

"In the cause of time, Nahash king of the Ammonites died, and his son succeeded him as king. David thought, "I will show kindness to Hanun

son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me.” So David sent a delegation to express his sympathy to him, the Ammonite nobles said to Hanun, “Do you think David is honoring your father by sending men to you to express sympathy? Haven’t his men come to you to explore and spy out the country and overthrow it? So Hanun seized David’s men, shaved them, cut off their garments in the middle at the buttocks, and sent them away. When someone came and told David about the men, he sent messengers to meet them, for they were greatly humiliated. The king said, “Stay at Jericho till your beards have grown, and then come back.” (1Chronicles 19:1-5 – NIV).

Anything can happen when something is wrong. See how people’s mind can deceive them. Do you know that many have been unjustly treated and humiliated on baseless grounds? Husbands and wives have separated and friends have quarreled on a mere suspicion. Do you also know that national interests and citizens have been sacrificed, suffered and killed on the altar of suspicion against member nations?

“When the Ammonites realized that they had become a stench in David’s nostrils,

Hanun and the Ammonites sent a thousand talents of silver to hire chariots and Charioteers from Aram Naharaim, Aram Maacah and Zobah. They hired thirty-two thousand chariots and charioteers, as well the king of Maacah with his troops, who came and camped near Medeba, while the Ammonites were mustered from their towns and moved out for battle.” (1CHRONICLES 19:6-7NIV).

The wicked runs when no one pursues him. Can evil succeed over righteousness and can darkness overcome light? Let people be mindful of helping those on the wrong way because they too can disappoint

you. David fought by the strength of God and defeated the enemies and made them subjects to him. Those who came to help the Ammonites- the Arameans- were not willing to help the Ammonites anymore (1Chronicles 19:8-19).

WITHOUT A LISTENING EAR/MIND

It takes discipline for one to exercise a listening ability. Listening simply means to make an effort to hear or to pay attention. Information is gotten from having a listening ear and if one is not informed he is bound to be deformed.

Information as knowledge is power. Even the Bible encourages a listening mind yet with caution, “My dear brothers, everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.” (JAMES 1:19-20 – NIV).

That a leader or one does refuse to hear advice or instruction may have contributed in no small measure to something being wrong somewhere. It takes wisdom on the part of a leader of the people to listen to advice.

Special advisers, the institutions of traditional rulers and elders are not meant for nothing. Their good services should be graciously upheld and encouraged.

“A wise man listens to advice.” (Proverbs 12:15).

THE WORDS OF THE ELDERS:

The saying that, “The words of the elders are words of wisdom.” is true. Most people reject the advice of the elders to their own peril. Elders are meant to be custodians of wisdom. The “old school” syndrome has many limitations. We know the unknown from the known and the future from the past.

The gray haired ones are the custodians of the historical antecedent of the past and can advice with their wealth of knowledge. Our adage, “Osogo owo osogo

Ifiok,”-that the aged have more wisdom than the young ones-easily comes to play- “The words of the elders are words of wisdom.”

This is what the LORD says: “Stand at the cross roads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, “We will not walk in it.” (JEREMIAH 6 : 16 NIV).

The move to consult with elders for advice on serious matters before major decisions are taken in the family, community and government is a welcome development, but this is not always the case with some people especially young people and because of this many things go wrong.

BE CAREFUL OF PEERS

Some of the opinions given to fellow peers are not in their own advantage.

The Scripture says, “Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all the Israelites had gone there to make him king .When Jeroboam the son of Nabat heard this(he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from king Solomon),he returned from Egypt. So they sent for Jeroboam, and he and the whole assembly of Israel went to Rehoboam and said to him: “Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you.” Rehoboam answered, “Go away for three days and then come back to me.” So the people went away.

Then king Rehoboam consulted the elders who had served his father Solomon during his life time. “How would you advice me to answer this people?” he asked. They replied, “If today you will be a servant to these people and serve them and give them a favorable answer, they will always be your servant.” (1KINGS 12:1-7 – NIV).

See the good advice of the elders to Rehoboam for the good of the subjects under him. “But Rehoboam rejected the advice the elders gave him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him. He asked them, “What is your advice? How would we answer these people who say to me, “Lighten the yoke your father put on us’?” The young men who had grown up with him replied, “Tell these people who have said to you, “Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but make our yoke lighter,--tell them, “My little finger is thicker than my father’s waist. My father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whip; I will scourge you

with scorpions.” Three days after Jeroboam and all the people returned to Rehoboam, as the king had said, “Come back to me in three days.” The king answered the people harshly. Rejecting the advice given to him by the elders, he followed the advice of the young men and said, “My father made your yoke heavy; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions.” So the king did not listen to the people, for this turn of events was from the LORD, to fulfil the word the LORD had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nabat through Ahijah the shilonite. When all Israel saw that the king refused to listen to them, they answered the king: What share do we have in David, What part in Jesse’s son? To your tents, O Israel! Look after your own house, O David!” So the Israelites went home. (1KINGS 12:8 - 16 – NIV).

It looks cheap and as a child’s play when some people make joke of some statements, words that have deep destiny implications before the elders and the people they appear to lead and be served. Rehoboam lost out due to peer group’s advice. People everywhere look for lightened yokes, things they can do easily.

Heavy yoke by implication is a curse and enslavement. Such that made the children of Israel to cry to God in Egypt as a result of their task masters. God heard their cries and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and came to their rescue. (Exodus 3).

Something is wrong if people just make some statements to please some group of people or peers while the subjects or nation is on fire. To respect or pay more attention to peers than those who elected you and national interest is working at one’s peril. All the ten tribes of Israel

abandoned Rehoboam leaving with him only two tribes. This was the beginning of Rehoboam's trouble.

NO ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

People who have been sent on training on various endeavors should be given the enabling environment to perform. Environment is that social condition which enable people to bring their expertise to bear on their various fields of endeavors.

Professionalism and skill acquisition should be given their pride of place. We are tired of allowing inexperienced people and quacks to handle sensitive and most volatile positions and cases as a means of compensation only to regret at the end. The inexperienced and quacks can only render inefficient services due to lack of knowledge but when experts are allowed to bring their expertise to bear, the different will be clear. Let incentives be given to skill acquisition and professionalism by giving them the enabling environment to perform. Working environments like spiritual, social, intellectual, psychological, industrial and financial environments eg research institutes, academy, schools, industries and the needed infrastructure should be established by government and organizations to foster enabling environment and practice for optimum production.

LACK OF EDUCATION

Education is the foundation of human development and the bedrock of all civilizations. Our educational foundation is weak. Money and not

sound educational foundation is now the main focus in our educational system.

One cannot compare the standard three or six and class five of those days to today's JS3 or SS3. Even some university degrees cannot be defended by many who carry them.

Today and in almost all the sectors of our nation, emphasis is on degrees and certificates rather than on morals, values, skills, and practice. How do we draw a line between the high degrees or certificates and the dwindling decay of our educational system, moral decadence, examination malpractices and inept services in our society?

Today, examination periods have turned to be money making ventures-extortion of money in some secondary schools- which are not only marred by serious cheating and mal-practice, but, where teachers who are paid by the government have exposed and reduced themselves to writing examinations for the students they have taught and demanding them to pay heavily for each paper they have written for them to the worry, financial weariness and decry of some parents of such students involved. To add to this menace, some parents who ought to have debunk this unfortunate scenario are rather the supporters and sponsors of this act by going to examination centers to be sure this is done, thinking that they are doing their children good thing. Is this how we were taught in our days and we are what we are today? Is this not a great harm we have done to our society?

What are we producing as turn-out to the labor market as secondary school leavers, undergraduates, and graduates in our society who will be the leaders, educators, scientists, manufactures, and inventors of tomorrow. How do we secure and preserve a future generation of self-

reliance, void of unnecessarily depending on others for what to do for themselves? There is therefore need for a total overhauling of the educational sector from the grass root.

Of course, the world celebrates certificates and best brain while the kingdom of God celebrates the fear of God and righteousness.

Education has to do with the development of the mind and character.., Our thought pattern, ideas and our attitudes are to be affected for the good of our society, where this is not so something is wrong.

Foundational teachings and their values like history, Christian Religious Knowledge etc which deal on our values and morals are eroding out of our curricula. Our core good values of learning our vernacular in schools, respect for elders and authorities are being gradually eroded by the shallow and sentimental modern idealism which does not ensure and preserve the desired social rapport and the proper or sound mental liberation of the people in the society. Westernisation more than our value system has eaten into the fabrics of our total system. Originality has given way to strange methods which are inimical to our value systems.

The main purpose of education is change. Change of attitudes and other fundamental principles of life beginning from the sweeper to the speaker-attitudinal change.

The level of ignorance due to no or poor educational foundation has given rise to abuse and unwholesome practices. Crimes, and behaviors detrimental to human life and existence are in abandon.

