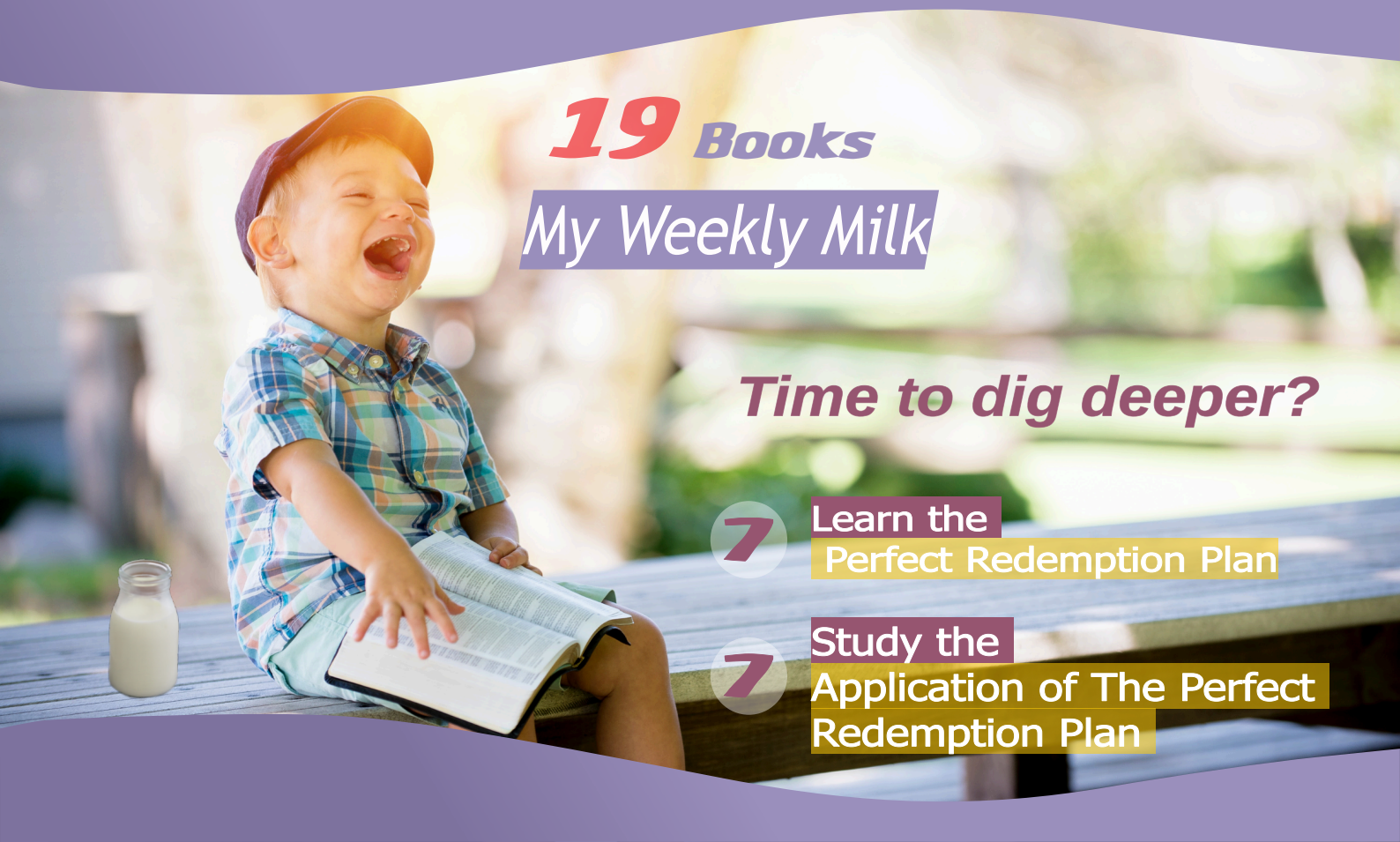
Contracts Versus Who God Is

14 my weekly Milk Series



HOPFAN HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS



19 Books

My Weekly Milk

Time to dig deeper?

7 Learn the Perfect Redemption Plan

7 Study the Application of The Perfect Redemption Plan

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Introduction to My Weekly Milk - Bible Studies

Where one can be fed with the milk of the word of God, be stirred up in the spirit and filled with spiritual strength to face the challenges we might encounter during the week and come out victorious.

We should forward this "My weekly milk" to as many people as we think it might bless.



Remember the Bible has the final authority, therefore brethren, whatever you read in this letter, be like the Christians of Berea who went back and checked in the scriptures if it was so.

These Bible studies are written and recorded for everyone who wants to learn the true Word of God in order to build themselves up in faith, enabling them to stand and not fall when the storms of life come their way. You will be taught what you receive when you become born again by Jesus' death burial and resurrection and the authority you have been given to fulfil the will of God on earth. And as you learn this, you will realise what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power. You will be a true disciple by the time you have finished them.

We all read and hear the same promises of God contained in the Bible. But the manifestations or fulfilment of them in our life is based on our obedience to the conditions attached to each one of those promises. Unfortunately, some Christians are disobedient and only think they can "claim it and grab it" and they end up frustrated.

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience.

Hebrews 4:1- 2, 6

Truth be told, God can veto your unbelief, provided you obey the conditions attached to the manifestation or fulfilment of that particular promise.

For what if some did not believe (including myself, yet I obey God's commands in spite of my unbelief)? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. Romans 3:3-4.

If we are faithless or unbelieving, (provided we obey what God commanded us to do) He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself. 2 Timothy 2:13

Some Christians think they can twist God's arm with their sacrifices: long fasts, long prayers on their knees, generous and sacrificial giving of money. All those we ought to do, yet as long as we are disobedient concerning the conditions attached to the fulfilment of that particular promise, our sacrifices are in vain.

So Samuel said: "Has 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 heed than the fat of rams - For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king." I Samuel 15:22-23

In the entire Old Testament, the word FAITH is only mentioned TWICE.

--The first time is in Deuteronomy 32:20

And He said: 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, For they are a perverse generation, Children in whom is No FAITH.

Here God was referring to the fact that He gave them commands to follow through Moses, and the moment Moses went up onto the mountain, to them it seemed like God had hidden His face, for they could not see Moses physically, so they made a golden calf, thus breaking God's commands. And the moment they had hardship in their wilderness life, they sinned sexually against God, and raised other leaders instead of Moses. God had to send those leaders Dathan, Korah and Abiram to hell in Numbers 16 and 18.

According to Moses, a Child of God has NO FAITH in a particular promise of God, whenever they disobey the commands or instructions of God attached to the fulfilment of that particular promise.

-- The second time is in Habakkuk:

I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, and watch to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am CORRECTED. Then the Lord answered me and said: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; but the JUST shall live by his FAITH. Habakkuk 2:1-4

Habakkuk was expecting God to give him instructions or commands, and to correct him in his ways and thoughts, as written in Isaiah 55:9-11, so that as he blindly followed those instructions or commands written down, he would see the manifestation or fulfilment of the God given vision.

Therefore according to Habakkuk the just or the righteous has FAITH, or lives by FAITH, whenever they simply obey the commanded instructions and corrections the Lord prescribed, in order to see the fulfilment of that particular promise contained in that vision.

Apart from those two times, no mention of faith is made again in the Old Testament, for they understood that it is simply to do God's word obediently.

That is why Moses told us the secret of having all those blessed promises in our life, saying: - "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God: Deuteronomy 28:1-2

Your confession of the word of God is worth nothing, until you deliberately decide to act on what you have been confessing. You can show God and men that you have faith by what you are doing, not merely by what you are saying.

But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. James 2:18

We show God and people our faith by our works or obedience to the word of God.

Faith is not a feeling or an emotion. In fact you can be crying, trembling and fearful as you are obeying that particular command or instruction from God that conditioned the manifestation of that promise. That's why throughout the Bible God says 366 times - fear not, do not be afraid: for each day of the year God says to you - trust Me, I am not a liar, fear not - only obey and I the Lord will be faithful to watch over My word and perform it Jeremiah 1:12.

FAITH is simple, it has to do with obeying God's word concerning a particular promise. As you read the Bible and the thousands of promises contained in it, you will start noticing a small word: IF- Either before the promise or just after the promise that is the condition to fulfil. Go and obey it and God will do the same thing in your life, stop deceiving yourself, claiming the promise when you do not obey the conditions, nor intend to obey them at any time.

You will also start noticing a second small word : WHEN. You will discover that as far as God is concerned those blessings are already yours, all His promises in Christ Jesus He has already said yes and so be it in your life. 2 Corinthians1:20.

God is not trying to make up His mind to give them to you, He already gave them to you. They will be manifested or fulfilled on earth in your life, when you start obeying God's word, to meet the requirements attached to each one of those promises.

That is the purpose of the My Weekly Milk Bible studies, we tell you your part to play to see the manifestation of the promises of God in your life, so that you stop living a frustrated Christian life, thinking that God has some favourite children. No, He has no favourite according to Acts 10:34-35.

Presented to you by
Gery Malanda

HOPFAN FOR ALL NATIONS HOUSE OF PRAYER



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Contracts versus who God is



Our main scripture reading is taken from Matthew 20:1-16.

Matthew 20:1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man (landowner) who is a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

Matthew 20:2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

Matthew 20:3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

Matthew 20:4 And said unto them; you also go into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

Matthew 20:5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

Matthew 20:6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and said unto them, Why have you been standing here all the day idle?

Matthew 20:7 They said unto him, Because no man has hired us. He said unto them, you also go into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right you shall receive.

Matthew 20:8 So when evening had come, the lord of the vineyard said unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their wages, beginning from the last unto the first.

Matthew 20:9 And when they came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a denarius.

Matthew 20:10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a denarius.

Matthew 20:11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house (landowner),

Matthew 20:12 Saying, These last have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal unto us, who have borne the burden and heat of the day.

Matthew 20:13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I am doing you no wrong: did you not agree with me for a denarius?

Matthew 20:14 Take what is yours and go your way: I will give unto this last man the same as unto you.

Matthew 20:15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with mine own things? Or is your eye evil, because I am good?

Matthew 20:16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen.

1 God is an honest employer.

In the days of Jesus, the people used to work for twelve hours in a day. They would receive for those twelve hours shift, a wage of one denarius. Jesus tells us, that the Landowner is God the Father. When we are serving God, we can expect to receive something from Him. God Himself tells us, that it is not in vain that we are serving the Lord. Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58). Now he who plants and he who waters are one: and every man or woman shall receive his or her own reward according to his own labour (1 Corinthians 3:8).

When we serve God, let us be expectant that He will reward our labour of love. Paul tells us: We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father (1Thessalonians 1:2-4). For God is not unrighteous (unjust) to forget your work and labour of love, which you have showed toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister (Hebrews 6:10).

When we come to God and when we serve Him, let us believe what He said about Himself. He is an honest employer. It would be unjust for Him to forget our labour of love and our work of faith. But even worse than that, it will be breaking His own scriptures, if He does not pay us the right amount of money or does not pay us at all. Jesus tells us that the scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35). Let us believe what God says in His word, for God and His words are one, and He has magnified His word above all His name (Psalm 138:2). Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled or stands firm in heaven (Psalm 119:89). The Lord will perfect that which concerns me (Psalm 138:8).

2. Shun false humility and man-made religion

I used to work with a dear sister in an outreach program for children. The sister used to do a similar outreach for a big Christian charity. That Christian charity was not paying its employees the normal wage, but it was giving them half the normal wage. And they asked their employees to have faith that God will give them the other half. They told them, that if they had enough faith like the founders of that Christian charity, God will also meet their need. “That sounds very deep spiritually”. But the truth is, for the five years she worked for that charity, she struggled, with her family, even to eat, not to talk about putting some nice raiment on her body.

The sister, when she was working with me, told us how wonderful it was to build her faith. After further discussion, she told me of a brother in her church she was working with, but the brother gave her nothing for six months. And she complained about that brother and she murmured. I told her, sister the brother also is running a charity, so why

do you want to be paid by that brother who is running a secular charity, when you decided to use your faith for God to meet your need, when you worked for that Christian charity? I said to her, sister the truth is, in your heart you were also murmuring and complaining when you were working for that Christian charity.

People have misrepresented God. They portray him as a dishonest God, who does not pay his employees, or pays them only half of the normal wage, and for the rest they must use faith. But when you see Jesus talking about the Father, He gave his employees one denarius, the normal wage. People must never impose their so called faith on others. They will tell you, God provided for us when we started this ministry, so since we have hired you, we ask you also just to believe. It is not right! If you use other people's services, pay them the normal wage, it is not up to them to give it back to the ministry. I paid that sister the normal wage when she was working with me, and she never gave it back to the ministry. So many people out there have been complaining and murmuring against God and the saints.

A pastor friend of mine was using the services of a cameraman to record their TV programs. They were not paying the brother a dime. And the brother was doing great recordings for their church. And the pastor recommended him to another church, so that he could also do their recordings. I stopped all of them at once. I told them; you are misrepresenting God. God never exploits people. You are using the bothers talents, equipment and time, and are not giving him a dime, and using the name of Jesus to do that! Jesus told us exactly what kind of employer God was. God does not exploit people. I told them from this day forward, pay the brother, and if you recommend him elsewhere, pay him too. And leave it to the brother to sow back that money into your ministry or keep it as the Lord leads him and not as you are trying to impose it on him.

2.1 The Example of our father Abraham

Our father Abraham went with his three hundred men to fight the confederacy of kings led by Chedorlaomer, who had captured his nephew Lot and his family in Genesis chapter fourteen. Abraham believed that God was his provider his Jehovah Jireh. So when he had defeated those kings and taken all their spoil; he restored it to the king of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham was full of faith and believed he did not need what belonged to the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. So he told them boldly: "I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth , that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, I have made Abram rich"(Genesis 14:22-23).

But father Abraham did not impose his faith on the three hundred men, who went with him to war. Though he refused to receive any reward for delivering Sodom and Gomorrah, yet he said: "except only what the young men have eaten and the portion of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol and Mamre; let them take their portion " (Genesis 14:24). Abraham asked the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah to give his 300 servants, who were led by Aner, Eshcol and Mamre, their portion of the spoils. Jesus tells us, if we say that we are children of Abraham, we must do the work of Abraham. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said unto them, If you were Abraham's children,

you would do the works of Abraham (John 8:39).

2.2 False humility

Paul warns us: beware lest any man spoil you, cheat you and take you captive, through philosophy and vain deceit or empty deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ or not according to Christ (Colossians 2:8). Jesus tells us that if we have seen Him, we have seen the Father. We know that whatever Jesus says about the Father is true. Let us do all things according to Christ who is the seed of Abraham. Since we are in Christ and have become the children of Abraham through Christ Jesus, let us walk like our father Abraham walked, and let us walk like Jesus walked.

God rewards everyone who serves him; let no one spoil you of that reward. Let no one cheat you or beguile you of that reward with their philosophy, theology or religion which is not based on Christ. Whatever people tell you; they must prove it in the word of God for Jesus is “The Word of God” (Revelation 19:13). So if something is according to Christ or after Christ; it must be based on the word of God. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one (1John 5:7). If it does not bear witness with the Word of God, it is neither of the Father, nor of Jesus nor of the Holy Spirit. It is established by men, it is a man-made religion, philosophy, theology; but it is not of God.

Paul goes even further to drive this point home and says: Let no man or woman beguile (cheat) you of your reward in a voluntary humility (taking delight in false humility) and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind (Colossians 2:18). It is an old trick of Satan; he pulled it with Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. LORD God said unto the woman, what is this that you have done? And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat (Genesis 3:13). The enemy always wants us to question the word of God: has God really said? With all these scriptures from the Old and the New Testament it is clear what the will of God is, but many well meaning Christians buy into that deceit of Satan. They cheat themselves of the reward God has in store for them. Adam and Eve cheated themselves of the reward of enjoying the Garden of Eden, and they found themselves expelled from that Garden.

Many well meaning Christians like that sister who used to work for that Christian charity, she thought she was voluntarily humbling herself, but it was a false humility. By so doing man tried to establish their self righteousness and make God look bad. They say to God: “look how humble I am”. But God is saying what you are doing is not according to my word and not according to Christ! The truth about that is, people will be vainly puffed up by their fleshy mind, they will say:” I have more faith than you all, because I refused to be paid for what I did”. But deep inside them they will be complaining and murmuring. God wants us to serve him joyfully. So let everyone give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Let us give our time, our energy into the work of the kingdom, not unwillingly (grudgingly) because people are coercing us, or of necessity because people say it must be and cannot be otherwise in this ministry or church. You will work and not be paid and glorify God. God is not glorified in any of

these things. If we had a physical employer who did not pay our wage we would sue him, and that employer would have a bad reputation among his competitors. Do we think that God is such an employer? No, God is far better than the best employer you ever worked for on earth.

Paul tells us: these things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility and neglect of the body or asceticism but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh (Colossians 2:23). It is not from God but men, it is a self-imposed religion, and they suffer things that God did not intend for them to suffer. But they do that to make themselves feel “super spiritual”. They establish their own holiness, their own righteousness and they feel good about that. That dear sister and her family, while she worked for that Christian charity, were ascetic and they thought God was doing that to them. May we always do things according to Christ and not otherwise!

2.3 Love those who despitefully use you.

Luke 6:28 Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who despitefully use you.

Unfortunately, in Christendom, we still have many believers who do not know that God rewards everybody that works in his vineyard. And even when some of them know, they still ignore the word of God and exploit brothers and sisters in the church, they despitefully use us. We are called to bless and not to curse, out of our mouth and heart must only go forth blessings. We pray for them, that God will open their eyes so that they will do things in the kingdom according to Christ. We pray that they will do the works of Abraham, since Abraham is their father. But above all we pray for ourselves, that God will give us the grace to love them unconditionally, and not to resent them for what they are doing or have done to us.

I was working with some brethren, and they asked me to go to a location. I had to pay for my train fare. They were supposed to be paying for my train fare too, since their own train fares were being paid for. But they thought that I did not need the money. I went a couple of times because the Lord told me to go and help them. But when the Lord did not tell me to go, I stayed at home. They were asking themselves: why did G not come? I knew that they knew the scriptures, and I know that God told them to pay my fare. So why should I use my food money for the train fare and suffer hunger? So, they decided to pay for my train fare and I went to London where they wanted me to be.

I was working with another group of Christians on a mission. The previous person, who was doing that mission work, was being paid a salary and his accommodation was also paid for by that group of Christians. But the moment I took over, they never paid me a salary and never paid for my accommodation for the couple of years that I worked with them. Not that I was doing that for the money, but we should not hold the word of God with partiality! Some thought: “this is a young man; he has not suffered in ministry like us, who have been in the ministry for years! It looks like we have worked in the Lord’s vineyard for twelve hours and this young man has only worked in the Lord’s vineyard for one hour. He should not be receiving any salary and privileges like those who have borne the heat of the sun for twelve hours. Therefore, we will not pay him any salary, nor pay for his accommodation, so that he will suffer the ways we suffered; and only after he has suffered like we

suffered and been in ministry for many years like us, then we will consider giving him the same salary and pay for his accommodation".

Jesus in His parable of Matthew 20:1-16 says that the Father does not treat the young minister that way! He gives them the same salary, though they have not been in ministry as long as the older ministers have been. My prayer is, that we will know the heart of God and not abuse and misuse young ministers, you do not have to give them a big salary; and do not be partial, so that you will pay one minister and not pay the other. May God bless them! Paul says: behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children (2Corinthians 12:14). This group of Christians had the money; but they were financially burdensome to that young minister! If we say we are spiritual parents, or we have been in the faith, or in ministry before, then we should make it easy for those who are coming up in the faith and in ministry and not be burdensome unto them! Our heart should be: what I went through I will not allow anybody to go through it if it is in the power of my hand to help.

That is why I write these bible studies. What took me years of studying and searching the scriptures; I put them into writings, so that the Christians who come after me; can just read the revelation and go and live it out. They will be able to do greater works than I; for they climb upon my spiritual shoulders to reach higher levels with God! If I had an evil eye; I would say: they also have to spend the time I spent in prayer, fasting, reading and studying the scriptures, to get the revelation God gave me! But when you know the ways of God, you understand that God does not think that way, so you should not think that way either! You should go and prepare the way for other believers by making the crooked ways straight, the rough places smooth, exalting the valleys by banking them up, and to bringing mountains low; so that the believers, coming after you, can run this race of faith as fast as possible, without worrying about pitfalls or stumbling blocks, for you have taken them all out of the way (Luke 3:5).

I have no condemnation whatsoever. I know God is not condemning me, because the way of the kingdom is clearly stated. If one party is ignoring the way of the kingdom, I am not under any obligation to do what they are asking me to do, unless God tells me to do it or I decide of my own freewill to do it. Let us avoid false humility. If we are doing something for free, let us do it with all our strength, might and heart. If we cannot do it, we tell that person or ministry I cannot do it for free, I need to feed my family, I need to let them know that when it is convenient for me, I will do it. Paul the great apostle to the Gentiles, asked the disciple Apollos, to go with the missionary team into Corinth, but Apollos said no. Paul writes to the church: now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time; however, he will come when he has a convenient time (1 Corinthians 16:12).

Apollos could have said yes, just to please Paul, but while he would have been on that journey, he would have been complaining and murmuring. God does not want us to be murmuring and complaining. Or Apollos could have said, I will go, but on the day of the missionary journey he would not turn up. I have seen in the ministry many people like that. They say yes to please the pastor, the prophet or the apostle but they do not do anything at all. God wants us to do things from our heart. Apollos wanted to serve God, but the time Paul wanted to send him, was not convenient for him, but he said he would

come when it was convenient for him. Let us learn to speak the truth to each other in love. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ (Ephesians 4:15)

But sometimes, some ministry or some brothers or sisters, have nothing to pay us with. If they had, we know they would give us the normal wage for our services. In that case, we help them with our whole heart. And when they are on their feet, able to function on their own; we either decide to let them continue on their own, or to be involved with them for a long period. Let our love be without hypocrisy or dissimulation, abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good (Romans 12:9). So let us love the brethren and the sisters, and let us never feel like people are exploiting us, or are taking advantage of our generosity. If we are helping people or a ministry, and we are not able to tell them that what they are asking us to do, is inconvenient for us right now, or we feel like we can never say no to them. Something is wrong, we have become a captive of that ministry or person. Only God has that authority over us.

3 The unilateral covenant

The Webster dictionary gives us the definition of the covenant as being: A mutual consent or agreement, of two or more persons, to do or to forbear some act or thing; a covenant is created by a deed in writing, sealed and executed; or it may be implied in the contract.

We will not do a study on the different types of covenants that are in the bible. If God instructs us, we shall do it one day, but we will just give the foundation of what God means when he talks about covenant. The Hebrew word for covenant is beriyth it is the cutting of an animal in two parts, and the people who make that covenant, pass between the pieces of that animal. So covenant always involves blood. The people entering into that covenant will state the terms of the covenant, and the dead animal tells each party that if they break that covenant, they will pay for it with their very lives.

The people in the olden days were always cheating each other, deceiving each other, and their word was worth nothing. They were not men and women of their words. So to make people accountable to their words, they would ask them at least to make a vow or an oath by their god. They were afraid of their gods, that if they were not faithful to their words, their gods might punish them. Still sometimes it was not enough just to take an oath by some gods, and wait for that god to avenge them if the vow or oath was broken. They added to the vow or oath, a covenant which is stronger than a vow or oath, for if a person breaks the covenant, the other party will take the matter into their own hands and kill them. They did not have to wait for any god to avenge them, they avenged themselves.

We are the children of Abraham, and have received the blessing of Abraham when we believed in Christ Jesus, the Seed of Abraham. Let us look at the covenant God made with him. In Genesis 15 when God made a covenant with Abraham, Abraham cut the animals in two and placed each piece opposite the other. In a normal covenant between two humans, they will both walk between the pieces of animals; the people are equal in that covenant. It is a bilateral covenant. But God put Abram in a deep sleep, Stated the terms of the covenant and God in a form of a smoking oven and burning torch, passed between those pieces. On the

same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram (Genesis 15:12-21).

God was the one who initiated the covenant, God is the one who stipulated the terms of the covenant, and God was the only one who walked between the pieces, Abraham never did. In other words, we have nothing to do with the covenant, it is God's idea, he is the one who will carry it out, and he is the one who will die for that covenant. God will do everything; we have nothing to do in that covenant. If there is death, it is God who will die; we will not die because we never walked between those pieces. For men indeed swear (vow) by the greater and an oath (a covenant) for confirmation is for them the end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heir of the promise the immutability or the un-changeableness of His counsel, confirmed or guaranteed it by an oath or covenant. That by these two immutable or unchangeable things (the words that He spoke as promises and the covenant) it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us (Hebrews 6:16-18).

The reason why God made a covenant with Abraham was to help him in his faith. God came down to the level of understanding that Abraham had. Abraham did not trust anyone, for men were not faithful. God spoke all those promises to him and swore to Abraham by His own Name, for there is no one greater name than God. But God was not done, He wanted to show Abraham more abundantly, that He will never change his mind concerning His counsel, that He made a covenant with Abraham. When Abraham saw those two signs and the fact that he had nothing to do, but only believe; he believed God.

When Abraham went onto that mountain to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering, he believed and concluded that God was able to raise Isaac, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense (Hebrews 11:19). Abraham knew he did not walk between the pieces of animals, so if there was death, it was not in his house, but in the house of God. So even if he offered up Isaac, God would raise him again. Abraham knew, and God had assured him by those two immutable things that it was impossible for God to lie. In Genesis 15:17 when God made the covenant with Abraham it was the "burning torch or burning lamp" that passed between the pieces. But who is that "burning torch"?

In Exodus 3:3 the Angel of the LORD appeared unto him (Moses) in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. The burning torch or the burning bush is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus made the Jewish leaders mad, when he told them, that I am the voice who spoke to Moses in the burning bush. I am your God, the I AM WHO I AM (Exodus 3:14). Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM (John 8:58). The same Jesus who is not only that burning torch, but also the Angel of the Lord, was the one speaking to Moses from the middle of the burning bush (Exodus 3:2). It is the same Angel of the Lord, Jesus, who asked Abraham not to kill Isaac. And the Angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, here I am. And he said, Lay not your hand upon the lad, neither do anything unto him: for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son from me (Genesis 22:11-12).

The same Jesus who made the covenant with Abraham, was the one who came to die

on the cross of the same mountain where Abraham offered up Isaac. God is the one who did everything through Christ Jesus. We have not and will never contribute to that perfect finished work of Jesus on the cross, and the New Covenant that has been sealed by the blood of Jesus. We see that God put Abraham into a deep sleep when Jesus passed between the pieces (Genesis 15:12). This is to let us know that God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us (made us alive) together with Christ, (by grace you are saved;) (Ephesians 2:4-5). For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly (Romans 5:6). And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:4-6).

People may say that this does not apply to Abraham for Jesus only died 2000 years ago, or it does not apply to Adam and Eve. So how could God forgive the sins of Adam and Eve or impute righteousness to Abraham when Jesus only died 2000 years ago. We saw him die 2000 years ago, but God tells us: the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8). God knows the end from the beginning, before Satan made his move to cause Adam and Eve to fall, the Lamb was slain, and was manifested to the world to see Him dying on that cross 2000 years ago. Either people accept it or not, God made the provision for everything we will ever need in this life and in the life to come. We cannot add to the perfect work of God. We must be like Abraham: For what does the scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness (Romans 4:3).

4. Grace not works: be diligent to enter Jesus' rest

We have been saved by grace through faith in Christ Jesus, and that not of ourselves; it is a gift of God; not of works lest any man or woman should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9). We could not save ourselves and everything we have in the kingdom, we received it as a gift from God. That word gift is not merely a present, no it is the Greek word doron which a present, but especially a sacrifice, in other words, someone has to die for you and I to receive that gift. Jesus had to die for you and me to receive the salvation package. The blood of bulls and goats was not good enough, God is not interested in our death, if one could die for himself then the whole earth would die, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). But Jesus the spotless Lamb of God, without sin offered Himself up on that cross in our stead that we might receive the free gift of salvation. And before dying Jesus said: it is finished (John 19:30).

4.1 Do the first work: Believe in Jesus

The people came to Jesus and asked Him: What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom he hath sent (John 6:28-29). Everybody is struggling with this question, what shall I do, and what work shall I do for God? Jesus is telling the world, this is the first work everybody must do: believe Jesus, for God has sent Him; believe His finished work on the cross in your stead, believe, His resurrection for your justification and your birth in the kingdom of God, believe that He is

the author and finisher of your faith (Hebrews 12:2). Should I join a prayer team? Should I join a department in the church? Should I give money to my church and to people? Should I …? Should I …? Jesus is telling us the very first work you must do, is, to believe in Me, to look unto Me, Jesus the author and finisher or your faith.

Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me, Jesus (John 14:1). Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness (Galatians 3:6). For I, Jesus, the Angel of the Lord, and the burning torch that passed between the pieces, was the one who made a covenant with your father Abraham and imputed my righteousness to him. Learn to rest in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Let us be diligent to enter that rest, for he or she who has entered into His rest (Jesus' rest) has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His (Hebrews 4:10-11). If we try to do it by our own power and ignore the finished work of Jesus, and the rest He offers us, this Christian journey would be frustrating and a set of rules and regulations that even our father could not follow. Many sincere Christians receive the same gospel which was preached as well as to us, but the word which they heard, did not profit them, not being mixed with faith (in the finished work of Jesus) in those who heard that gospel. For we who have believed (in the finished work of Jesus in our stead) do enter that rest (Hebrews 4:2-3).

Brethren and sisters, the works were finished from the foundation of the world (Hebrews 4:3). Whatever you and I may need both spiritually and physically, has been provided for us through Jesus Christ by his death and resurrection. It is not too late for you and I to enter that rest and cease from our works. Today after such a long time, as it has been said: "today if you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart" (Hebrews 4:7). Study what Jesus accomplished for you on the cross and enter that rest.

4.2 Work mindset versus grace mindset

Many Christians, when they come before God, want to stand on their own merit and not on what Jesus has done for them. They will always be quantifying whatever they do in the kingdom. They are like the Pharisees, they loved God, they read all the scriptures, and they had a disciplined life. They fasted twice a week, they read their scriptures they prayed, and they gave their tithes. But they thought it was their own power, and their own will, and their own decision-making. They felt good, because all that established their self-righteousness. And they missed Jesus, because if you have already established that you are righteous by all your good deeds, then you do not need Jesus at all! They looked down on everybody else who did not fast as much as they did, who did not pray as much as they prayed, who did not tithe and do good deeds as much as they did.

They had a point system to measure how self righteous they were. So that's why they did all things in public to be seen by men, they prayed only in the synagogue where everybody could see them and count how many times they had been in the synagogue? When they fasted, they made sure everybody knew how often they fasted. When they gave money to the synagogue, they made so much noise to draw attention to them and in case someone did not notice how big their offerings, pledges, tithes were; they would come and give a testimony!

Should we fast, pray, read the scriptures, study the bible; give to the church and to people? Of course, we should do all that, but what is our motive for doing that? If it is to establish our own righteousness or our own works, then we have missed it. God is faithful and he always rewards each one according to his work.

Therefore, in our main text, the first set of employees, decided to sign a contract with God. We work for 12 hours and you give us one denarius (Matthew 20:2). We have seen that our contract is a covenant, and it is a unilateral covenant. When people do not trust God, or think, they can make it a bilateral covenant, in other words: I get what I deserve, because I have worked for it. God just smiles! Aha, these people think we are equal in this covenant! And we come before God with all our scriptures, and we have a wrong attitude toward God, because we think it is our own power and strength that has brought us where we are.

We think since we have prayed in tongues for 2 hours every day or read our bible one chapter every day, then God “must” give us what we deserve. Or since we have always been a good Christian, have always given our tithes and offerings, God must bless us more that those who have just started to do likewise, after all we have been doing that from our youth. We ought to be the millionaires in this church! Paul tells us: if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise, work is no more work (Romans 11:6). Since God promised that he will reward our work, he will not lie to us, he will do so, but he will do it according to our belief or faith. Jesus asked the blind men who were following Him, so that he could open their eyes:” Do you believe that I am able to do this?” they said to Him, yes Lord. Then Jesus touched their eyes saying: “According to your faith or belief let it be to you” (Matthew 9:28-29).

Many people when they come to Christ with their problems or needs, when Jesus is asking them: Do you believe that I am able to do this? Subconsciously they are saying yes because I am a good Christian, because I did all the things you asked me to do. So I kind of deserve it. When I started tithing, I was counting every month how much I was giving to God, keeping a record, and telling him and I gathered lots of scriptures in the Old Testament, I claimed what I thought God was “owing me” because I have given Him that amount of money. But brethren and sisters God is good. Truly, these times of our ignorance God overlooked (winked at us), but now commands all men and women everywhere to repent (to renew their mind, change their way of thinking) (Acts 17:30).

God was never giving me what I deserved, but more than what I wrongly thought “He owed me”. And it got to a point when I was only getting the amount I was claiming based on the scriptures. And I became angry and frustrated. So God told me I was getting what I deserved since I had a work mindset, I rejected the grace of God, and had established my own system of points, when I have scored some points with my good deeds of giving, I came to God and pelted the heaven with all my scriptures, but it was not working and God was not answering me. I thought I needed to fast more, I needed to pray more, and I needed to read more scriptures every day. I realised that I was trying to establish my own righteousness just like the Pharisees, though nobody knew about it because I thought I was not like the Pharisees because I was not telling anybody. But God knew my heart, that I was becoming a hypocrite like the Pharisees.

And one day, when I was reading Matthew 20, I realised that I had become like the first set of employees who were frustrated and angry, their eyes were evil because God was good to the other employees. God did not do us any wrong, we came to Him with a work mindset, we brought our contract, and when I was praying I remember back then, almost shouting at God: “you wrote in your bible and sealed it with your blood, You are obligated to do it!” I wept because I was convicted by the Holy Spirit. The gentle voice told me: “Son, it is a unilateral covenant; I made that covenant with Abraham or all the other covenants with them because I wanted them to believe me, and I wanted them to have faith. I do not need a set of rules and regulations or a contract to bind Me!” Just like Jesus said: Friend, I am doing you no wrong: did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way: I will give unto this last man the same as unto you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with mine own things? Or is your eye evil, because I am good (Matthew 20:13-15)?

Let us never have the work mindset in the kingdom of God, but grace through faith in Jesus. The other employees did not sign any contract with the Landowner in Matthew 20, because they knew they had already missed many hours. They knew they did not deserve to receive one denarius because their works were not enough. They trusted the goodness of the landowner, they believed in grace, receiving what you do not deserve. So, do we do nothing at all, because we rest in the finished work of Jesus or because it is by grace through faith? Certainly not, in the parable of Jesus in Matthew 20, everybody worked in the vineyard, even if it were only for one hour. We still need to do what God asks us to do: read your bible, pray, give, fast, etc. But what our belief is will determine what we get from God. If we believe it is by grace through faith in Christ Jesus, then God will bless us according to His good pleasure.

The Lord is good. A stronghold in the day of trouble and He knows those who trust in Him (Nahum1:7). Believe God is good all the time. Trust in Him, in who He is, trust in His nature. The other employees who did not work twelve hours were in trouble, for they had families to feed and they knew they had not worked enough hours to be able to feed their family. God is good, when we serve God we have bread enough and to spare, he will not allow his servants and their families to suffer hunger (Luke 15:17)! When your heart is established by grace and not by your own works, you will be amazed how God will bless you both physically and spiritually. Paul warns us: Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace (Hebrews 13:9).

Believe that God is love, that He does not have any delight in seeing His children going through difficulties in life. Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bears long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on the earth (Luke 18:7-8)? God wants to move on our behalf, but will we allow Him to do so? Do we believe or have faith, that he can do it for us, without us adding to His finished work? Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on the earth?

Today when I come before God in prayer, I do my best to remove my work mind-set, and rest in Jesus finished work on the cross. I give my attention to the word of God; I read it not to tell everybody how many pages I read every day. But I want to find out what Jesus had already fulfilled on my behalf, so that I do not have to work for that or to beg him for that, but simply receive it by grace through faith in Jesus. Jesus has become my star of Bethlehem, that the wise men of the east

followed. He is my bright and morning star, I see Jesus everywhere in the scripture, in people, in me, and I follow him by grace through faith. I know it is God who works in me both to will and to do for his good pleasure (Philippians 2:13). I started by grace and I intend to finish by grace, Jesus being the author and finisher of my faith.

If we have been like the first set of employees in the vineyard who thought it was by their own works, if we had a work mindset and not a grace mind-set, it is never too late. Even if our eye was evil because God is good to those who came by grace through faith, there is always room for repentance, for the renewing of our mind. Let us rejoice with those who rejoice when God has blessed them, it is the first step for renewing our mind. And let us see Jesus and embrace Him.

May God help each one of us, to always see Jesus, and put our faith in His finished work, that it might always be by grace through faith in our Christian journey.

God Bless you,

Gery Malanda



About Hopfan

We are a group of born again Christians who humble ourselves in prayer to Abba Father in the name of Jesus to prayerfully set people free from oppression – sickness and disease, through signs and wonders, to bring the unbelieving to the light and freedom that is available in JESUS CHRIST! for the salvation of the 50 nations of Europe, starting in Glasgow Scotland.

We publish many teaching materials, which can all be accessed for free online in ebook format and can be purchased at cost online, in print format. We also host a program on TBN called Voice of Healing. Please visit **hopfan-europe.org** for further details

If you have been blessed by this ministry, please prayerfully consider donating to our work. Any funds received will be used within the ministry with the aim that anyone can access our work and benefit from it at no cost; thus enabling us to impact countless lives. Also consider becoming a monthly covenant partner with us, so that we can continue to pay for the **production and airing of the Voice of Healing on TBN UK.**

Unfailing love and many thanks for your support.

Your beloved Brother
Gery Malanda.

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1. **My Weekly Milk**
2. **Come Home**
3. **Neither Do I Condemn You**
4. **David's sexual sin exposed**
5. **The Power Of Confession**
6. **Abecedary Of Prayer**
7. **Return journey Gilgal - Jordan (East)**
8. **The Seven Hebrew Words for Praise**
9. **Divine Guidance**
10. **The Heart of a Son or Daughter**
11. **Can Christians Celebrate Halloween**
12. **Leaven in Bread**
13. **Going Through The Fire**
14. **Biblical Prosperity**
15. **Contracts Versus Who God Is**
16. **It is Well With My Children and Me**
17. **I am Searching for my Lost Donkey!**
18. **He Kept The Good Wine For The End**
19. **Sailing With Jesus**
20. **You are the Salt of the World**

After having read and studied these **19** Foundational Bible topics in the **My Weekly Milk** series, preferably in the order given above, then Dig Deeper and progress with the **Perfect Redemption Plan** series, followed by the **Application of the Perfect Redemption Plan**

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