

Wrong Resources for Money

Usury, Bribery, Fraud, Corrupt Business, Gambling, Cheating and Extortion

II. Usury: It is the practice of making unethical or immoral monetary loans that unfairly enrich the lender. It is to lend money or other things which are to be returned with an additional percentage either on a daily basis or monthly basis and it can be one fifth or more of the capital which is a huge amount of money. Those who are in urgent need of money are charged a huge interest for the money they had borrowed. This is sheer exploitation of the helplessness of people in need. You find them paying the huge interest every month but the capital that they had borrowed is still to be paid. Their blood is sucked by the money lenders. **Those who practice and live on usury will be cursed and will not enjoy eternal life unless they repent.** *“1 Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? 5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.” (Psalm 15:1, 5 KJV)*

“19 Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury.” (Deuteronomy 23:19 KJV) At the time of Nehemiah, the people complained and expressed their suffering and the bondage that they were in because of usury lent upon them by the fellow Israelites. Nehemiah faced the people who practiced usury and challenged them to repent and correct the situation or they would be shaken out from the house of God. Read the following: *“1 And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews. 2 For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many: therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live. 3 Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth. 4 There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards. 5 Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards. 6 And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. 7 Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them. 8 And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer. 9 Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? 10 I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury. 11 Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them. 12 Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. 13 Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD. And the people did according to this promise.” (Nehemiah 5:1-13 KJV)* Those who were unwilling to comply with the calling of God, which was to stop indulging in usury, were cleared, faced, and told by Nehemiah, “So

God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied.” (Nehemiah 5:13 KJV) **Those who continue to practice usury will not enter into the Kingdom of God unless they repent.**

III. Bribery: It is the crime of giving someone money, gifts, or something else of value, often illegally, to persuade that person to do something you want or give you something that you don't deserve. Those who offer bribes are taking away the rights of other people using their money. We cannot use money to take what God has not ordained for us to receive. Sometimes people bribe us and give us some money to get from us what is not due to them. Therefore, **“19 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.” (Deuteronomy 16:19 KJV)** *“34 For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.” (Job 15:34 KJV)* *“6 I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD: 7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works. 8 LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. 9 Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men: 10 In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes, 11 But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.” (Psalm 26:6-11 KJV)* *“15 He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; 16 He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” (Isaiah 33:15-16 KJV)* *“11 Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. 12 For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” (Amos 5:11-12 KJV)*

I never receive gifts from church members and if anyone does offer money as an offering or love gift, I add it to the church collection under the person's name, and I tell the person I did such. Why I don't receive gifts is because of the following reasons: first, in their offering, they might include the tithe. If I use that, it would prevent God from opening the floodgates of Heaven and blessing the people who gave. In that case, I would cause harm to the people who have offered and harm to myself by robbing God. Second, if someone offers you a gift, you are indebted to him as he has done you a favor. You will be obliged to pay back in some form or the other. If the person needs correction, it will be difficult to teach or correct him and he may even get offended for correcting him because he might think you shouldn't since he had given you a gift. I teach and instruct the ministers and workers under my care not to receive gifts and if somebody offers them money, then they should add it to the church account in the person's name so that if it is tithe or firstfruit or offering, then God will bless that person according to his conduct.

Paul did not offer a bribe. Even when he was in prison, he was kept by Governor Felix who expected Paul to give him some money. But Paul stood firm and endured suffering without compromising, in order to keep the testimony. *“24 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. 25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I*

will call for thee. 26 He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. 27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.” (Acts 24:24-27 KJV) Money can play a dirty role in our lives and that is why we need to be cautious neither to give nor to receive bribes.

IV. Fraud: It is wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in a financial or personal gain. It is to show a faked document as original in order to gain a privilege. “17 Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.” (Proverbs 20:17 KJV) Faked documents or certificates may help us to get a job or a certain position. At the beginning, we might enjoy the benefits and progress but later on we have to bear the consequences of this sin. What we think as something good would, later on, turn bitter in our lives and mouth. By indulging in fraudulent methods, money can be multiplied, but later on, there can be destructive consequences. Moreover, this type of income will yield no fruit or blessing because God will never bless wickedness.

V. Corrupt businesses: There are certain jobs and businesses that produce income but they are not the right channels of God’s blessing for us. Examples of such businesses are prostitution, drug trafficking, running bars and nightclubs, smuggling, under the table transactions, and so on. “19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 KJV) The income that comes from such businesses is not from God but from the devil.

VI. Gambling: It is to gain money and profits by playing certain games like poker and indulging in cock-fighting, racing, betting, lotteries, raffles, and so on. God has commanded us to work hard in order for us to eat the fruit of our labor. “10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10 KJV) Gambling promotes laziness and slackness.

Every work provides service but gambling provides no real service to man. To the contrary, it might harm others when they are losing their money and their resources of living. Any person who gets engaged in gambling is intentionally aiming to harm his neighbor by causing him a loss in his finances. Harming others is against the Scripture of God: “10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Romans 13:10 KJV) “8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.” (James 2:8 KJV) Gambling is selfishness. God does not want us to get our food and provide for our needs through someone else who lost his money in a game with us. This is not reflecting the image of God.

VII. Cheating and extortion: “1 Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit. 2 And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more. 3 And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord GOD: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence. 4 Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, 5 Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and

falsifying the balances by deceit? 6 That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat? 7 The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. 8 Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. 9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: 10 And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day. 11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: 12 And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. 13 In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst. 14 They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.” (Amos 8:1-14 KJV) Cheating and extortion are what the Lord here is combating with, in the prophecy of Amos. The deceitful people were bent on using false measures to falsify the balances to swallow up the needy. They used their own power and authority to extort the poor of the land. Not only that, they sold the refuse of the wheat at the same price as the good one, “sell the refuse of the wheat” (Amos 8:6 KJV) That was another thing that was disgusting to the Lord and ignited His anger. True justice to the poor and needy and offering them their rights is what the Word of God declares clearly and profoundly. It was the believers who indulged in wickedness, for they were “Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat,” (Amos 8:5 KJV) They were waiting for the new moon and the Sabbath to end, to resort to wrong ways of earning money. They didn’t work to serve others and earn their living but they nursed wickedness in their heart, “making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? 6 That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?” (Amos 8:5-6 KJV) They didn’t fear God nor did they have respect for man. Their thoughts were dishonorable in their service to other men. When church members observe such principles in their lives, that demonstrates their unwillingness to follow God and their total rejection of His Word; it will result in God shutting their ears to His Word. Since they refuse to repent and change their ways of dealing with people, the Lord shall not provide relief to them. Even if they go and seek counsel or advice to get relief from their financial restraints (debts, loans, bankruptcy), the Lord will not allow them to hear the solutions for their troubles. God will deal with such Christians and with such churches firmly and inflict discipline on them. He will take away His blessings from them and cause them to stagger under financial constraint and famine of God’s Word in their lives.

My dear and beloved: After having studied the wrong sources for finances, we need to understand that Satan sometimes may give us material things through wrong resources but these will be used to cripple us and destroy us. So let us be alert and self-controlled; refusing to accept money that does not come from God. Let us be like Abram who earlier in his life refused to take from the king of Sodom more than what was due to his men. “21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.” 22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, 23 That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have

made Abram rich:24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.” (Genesis 14:21-24 KJV)

Let us, therefore, be self-controlled and alert and not be deceived and enticed to receive money from wrong sources and entangle ourselves with sin and curses, but let us reject and resist the offers of the devil and be saved. **“8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” (1 Peter 5:8-9 KJV)**

Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word and the teaching that I received in this message. Lord thank you for all what I received from you from resources. Lord thank you for all the corrections the rebukes and the admonishments that I received and the explanation about the wrong resources of money as usury, bribery, gambling, corrupt businesses, fraud, cheating, extortion and all their bad effects.

Repent and renounce all your sins. Renounce your wrong resources of money. Renounce practicing usury and enslaving the people with high interests. Repent of your bribery and your contribution to corruption. Repent of using your resources in gambling and refuse to work hard to earn your living. Renounce your involvement in corrupt businesses like running bars, prostitution, smuggling, etc. Renounce your involvement in fraud in money and documents to get things that you don't deserve and in a wrong way. Renounce all your ways in cheating and your extortion from people using various methods. Repent of your lack of fear in God. Repent of your non willingness to suffer for Christ and to serve Him. Confess your non willingness to go along the plan of God and to do His will in your life. Lord I repent and renounce the following sins _____.

Lord thank you for all the resources that you had placed in my hand. Lord I commit myself to use all these resources to work and to live honestly according to your Word. Lord I commit myself to turn away from all those ungodly resources that come from the devil that I will totally refrain from them. Lord I commit myself to be a good testimony to others and to start to serve you and do your will and your plan in my life. Lord continue to provide for me so I will continue to live in holiness.

Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins and amended their ways and came back to you willing to do your will and the good plan that you have for them. Lord continue to provide for them so they will continue to live in holiness, to serve you and be good testimony to others to follow you.

Lord bless us as your church and help us to continue to teach your people and to correct them and admonish them with your Word. Lord lead us as a church to deal with those who are involved in getting wrong resources of money, that we can reach them out and teach them your Word and direct them in your ways so they will be saved. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the Spiritual gifts that we need in our lives to go on and evangelize, and make new

disciples and train new workers to go and plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to be water Baptized and receive the Holy Spirit Baptism. Lord prepare us for your coming to go with you when you come. Lord take the message and spread it to bring the fruit that you desire to see in the life of your church and your people. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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