

*What others say about GLEANINGS FROM THE THRONE OF GOD*

In reading 'Gleanings from the Throne of God', I experienced such a therapeutic feeling that comforted my soul releasing the peace of God in my heart. Indeed, when understanding is given to a matter, the result thereafter is peace but, in this case, peace of God.

As one reads through the pages, one can easily identify with the author as many of us have had or have the same struggles in matters that are discussed in this book.

Her simplicity, sincerity, and passion speak for itself. I would recommend this book to anyone that is searching for the peace of God that surpasses knowledge. In this book, you will discover that getting to know what God wants us to do is quite different from knowing why He wants us to do it.

Pastor Dapo Williams, The Fountain of Life church,

Ilupeju

## GLEANINGS FROM THE THRONE OF GOD

By

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Thank you for respecting the hard work  
of this author.

Scripture quotations are from the New International Version of the Bible

Take note that the name satan and related names are not capitalized. We choose not to acknowledge him, even to the point of violating grammatical rules

## **Table of Content**

[Book 1 – The Joy of Thanksgiving](#)

[Book 2 – Empty Pursuit](#)

[Book 3 – What Do You Have in Your Hands](#)

[Book 4 – Parent’s Talk](#)

[Book 5 – Becoming the Woman God Intends You to Be](#)

[Book 6 – You Don’t Have to Be Perfect](#)

[Book 7 – Dangers of Worry](#)

[Book 8 – The Suffering That Makes Perfect](#)

[Book 9 – Though It Hurts, I Must Forgive](#)

[Book 10 – Standing for God](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Other Books by the Author](#)

## **Book 1: THE JOY OF THANKSGIVING**

In my years of walking with God, I have tried to gain understanding as to why the Lord gives certain instructions and commands. I have tried to know the mind of God concerning some demands He makes of His children. And one of such demands is the issue of giving thanks in all circumstances, both in good times and bad times.

*1 Thessalonians 5:18*

*Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

*Ephesians 5:19-20*

*“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord. Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

I wondered why God would require us to give Him thanks in the midst of great trials and challenges, and why He would command His children to thank Him even when all is not well. I tried to imagine someone in great grief who is probably mourning his/her loved one and such a person is asked to give thanks to God. And I concluded in my heart that this is a hard teaching. But mindful of the fact that the will of God for us is not of evil but good, to give us hope and to bring us to an expected end, I decided to inquire of the Lord for an understanding into the issue of thanksgiving.

I am sure many would have concluded that Job of the Bible gave thanks in the midst of his own trials, but many will also agree with me that in the mere sense of it, that is a very difficult thing to do. It takes great faith and knowledge in God's word for someone to get to the point of giving thanks in the midst of grief.

I want us to understand that there is a difference between resigning to fate thus giving thanks to God anyway and genuinely giving thanks to God as a form of true worship of the Lord God Almighty in the midst of calamities and trials. The thanksgiving God requires is true worship and not just lips service where deep inside we wonder if God really understands what we are going through for Him to ask us to give Him thanks.

How is it possible to get to the point as Job did, where we can truly say, “the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised” (Job 1:21b)? The joy of thanksgiving is the point where you have a good knowledge and relationship with the God you serve, and you perfectly understand that the Lord has you in mind no matter what you are going through. You are confident of the fact that your names are written on the palms of His hands and not a strand of your hair will fall off without His knowledge. You are sure that God loves you unconditionally, and that whatever you are passing through is just a means to an end. And with the knowledge of His unending love for you, you just want to say thank you to this wonderful God.

Know for a fact that it is only God who sees the end from the beginning, and He understands why you have to pass through such rough terrain. And though you are grieving at the moment, it is just a means to an end; though you are financially bankrupt, it is just a means to an end; though you are facing diverse trials and challenges, it is just a means to an end.

As children of the living God, we need to seek the face of God for an understanding to know why He requires us to give Him thanks in all circumstances, why He demands unconditional praise from us at all times. We need to search out how we can attain the point of giving thanks no matter how bad the situation of our lives gets. We need to learn how we can reach the point in our lives where we can look at the troubles and challenges of our lives in the face and just look up to heaven and say what Job said, “may the name of the Lord be praised.”

I know many people will agree with me that attaining this point of worship and fellowship with God does not come like a piece of cake. It takes cultivating a consistent relationship with God and gaining insight into the mind of God over the situations of our lives.

Job, the Bible says was a righteous man and there was none like him in his days (Job 1:8). I would not be wrong to assume that Job understood that even in the height of the trials that befell him God was still with him. And that knowledge gave him the comfort and a basis of worship. He understood that God would not allow such troubles to befall him if He was not taking him somewhere. The devil might have intended it for evil, but the Lord meant it for good and so Job worshiped God. Although Bible records show that Job asked questions, he never cursed God.

This same confidence was also displayed by Abraham the friend of God. Abraham knew the God he served and was willing to offer his only son - the fulfillment of God's covenant to him as a sacrifice to the Lord at His command. He knew that God had the power to raise his son up again. Abraham understood that for the Lord to ask him to offer up his son as a sacrifice, He was up to something. And so, he obeyed.

He knew that the will of God for him was perfect. And in the midst of this, Abraham was going to worship God. Genesis 22:4-5 records that “immediately Abraham saw the place where the Lord had directed him to from afar off, he told his servants to wait while he and the son go further to worship.” As far as Abraham was concerned, he was just going to worship. I am sure a lot of people will agree with me that what God asked Abraham to do was the height of tough request, yet Abraham regarded this as worship.

Going back to the two major questions of this study; i) why does God require us to give Him thanks in all circumstances, and ii) how do we arrive at the point in our relationship with God where we can truly give thanks to God in all circumstances - that is, a true worship which is a pleasing aroma in the presence of God-given both in our good times and bad times.

### ***WHY DOES GOD REQUIRE US TO GIVE HIM THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES?***

Like so many others, on many occasions, I had thought and asked God questions as to why He would have us give thanks even when things are not going so well and we seem to be enveloped in great pain, or some other form of challenges. And as I began to trust God over this issue, the Holy Spirit dropped the word “Acknowledge” in my spirit as a form of translation for the word thanksgiving. I tried looking up the synonyms for the words “thanks and acknowledge” and I found

the word “recognize.” That is to say the words thanks, acknowledge and recognize are similar in meaning. So, I will try to translate the passage 1Thessalonian 5:18 like this: “acknowledge/recognize God in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”

God wants us to acknowledge Him in everything we are going through. In truth, whether in good times or bad times God's presence never leaves us. Psalm 121:3-5 tells us that “He will not let our foot slip, and He who watches over us will not slumber, the Lord watches us, the Lord is our shade at our right hand.” The fact that we are going through tough times at the moment has not changed the content or power of the word of God spoken in Psalm 121:3-5. Our present situation is not a proof that God has left us. Remember He said, “even though we walk through the valley of shadow of death, His rod and His staff will comfort us.”

And so bearing this in mind, we need to acknowledge the presence of God in our lives at all times. We need to acknowledge Him even more in our troubled times. This acts as a comfort in our lives, and as evidence that the challenge of that moment will not last forever, and most importantly because thanksgiving is the will of God for us in Christ Jesus. We get the devil confused when we praise and acknowledge God in our troubled times.

In order to appreciate this better, let us consider this illustration as an example. (Note that this story is not a true story but just an illustration). Once a member of the US military troop died in battle in Iraq and the president of the United State of America rose up from his busy schedule to pay a condolence visit to the bereaved family. The presence of the president in the home of the grieving family is regarded as an honor. In fact, the visit will be on the daily journals and newspapers and many people will say that this soldier died in honor. It will be said that he was more honored in death than while he was alive. The president will be given a special seat and treated with respect. The mother of the soldier will not tear the president's clothes and ask why her child was sent to battle. It will be a thing of honor that the president attended the funeral.

Now here is the King of kings and Lord of lords ever present with us even in times of trouble, but we never bother to say thank you to God for being there always or arrange a special place for Him in our hearts and lives even in our grieving moments. What most people do is to ask why? They just wonder why they have to be the ones to go through all such challenges. Yet the Lord never leaves nor forsakes us.

We treat the presence of a mere mortal with so much pride and honor without a place for the God that can heal all wounds, turn our lives around for good, take us from one level of glory to another, make us soar up on wings as eagles and ultimately change our story. How much more are we to acknowledge, respect and treat with honor the presence of the King of kings, the Maker of the heavens and the earth in our lives, in our situations, at all times, in all seasons, through good and bad times.

When we have come to understand that God is always with us, we will acknowledge Him. We will give Him praise and we will want to do nothing else but to say thank you to the God who never stops loving us not minding our shortfalls. We should appreciate Him not just for the things we have seen Him do, or the things we are believing Him to do in our lives, but most of all for His reassuring presence in our lives and situations. The presence of the Lord in our lives is the only guarantee we need for a fulfilled life on earth. The presence of God stills the storms of our lives;

His presence is bigger than any president we can see, bigger than any state governor or even any town chief.

If the Lord visits you on your sick bed, you are guaranteed healing; if the Lord visits you at your workplace you are guaranteed a divine promotion; if the Lord visits your studies, you are guaranteed a spirit of excellence; if the Lord visits your home, you are guaranteed peace from heaven; if the Lord visits your marriage, you are guaranteed a joyful and lovely marriage; if the Lord visits your business, you are guaranteed a successful breakthrough. All the Lord is asking is; “My children, acknowledge my presence, give me praise, sing me songs of thanksgiving and let Me do the impossible in your lives.”

The Lord is our ever-present help in times of trouble; this is a good enough reason to thank God always. We do not need any better reason to give God the thanks and praises He deserves more than the reason of His awesome presence in our lives at all times. The Lord is requiring that we give Him thanks because He needs us to acknowledge that He is there with us and for us at all times no matter what we are going through. And the fact that we acknowledge and thank Him for His presence in our lives takes us steps above the challenges we may be going through. It carries us steps above the devices of the enemy.

No wonder God told the children of Israel to praise Him in their troubled times. Just the sound of the trumpet and a shout was all it took to bring down the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6). The secret behind the victory of God's people was that for six days they circled round Jericho acknowledging the Lord with the sound of their trumpet. We need to develop an attitude of praise and thanksgiving even in the face of challenges.

The book of 2 Chronicles 20 tells us about the deliverance the Lord brought about for the people of Judah under king Jehoshaphat as they worshiped and gave thanks to God in the face of battles from three tribes - the Ammonites, Moabites, and the people of Mount Seir. They acknowledged the Lord with their praises and by the time they got to the battlefield, they met only dead soldiers. That is what praise does in the lives of God's children.

By acknowledging God with our praises and thanksgiving, we are displaying our trust in His ability to lift us out of our challenges. By true worship and thanks to God, we move God to do the impossible in our lives. That is why the Bible says to give thanks in all circumstances. The Bible also tells us that “in all our ways we should acknowledge Him, and He will direct our path.”

### ***HOW CAN WE GIVE THANKS EVEN WHEN THINGS ARE NOT GOING WELL?***

Let us now consider how to get to the point in our lives where we can freely and truly appreciate and give thanks to God both in good and bad times. Giving thanks flows freely from a joyful heart. This leads to the topic of our study, “the joy of thanksgiving.” A heart that is joyful will always give thanks, but we should note that joy is not a display of emotions and does not spring up from things that are seen. Joy is not felt only when things are going right.

Joy is a fruit of a Holy Spirit. It is one of the fruits that grow from the Spirit of God living inside of us. It's a deposit of the in-filling of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the sons and daughters of the living God (Galatians 5:22-23). The Bible tells us in Ephesians 1:13-14 that “having believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have been marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.” If that

is the case, we have the deposit of the gift of joy in our lives as soon as we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and have been marked with the promised Holy Spirit.

### ***BE BORN AGAIN***

To simplify this matter and break it up into steps, it is better to understand it from this perspective: In order to have a life of all-round thanksgiving, you first need to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. You need to accept Him as your Lord and personal savior. It is in Him that our lives are marked with a seal which is the promised Holy Spirit that produces the fruit of Joy which then translates into a permanent life filled with thanks and praises to God.

### ***CULTIVATE THE FRUIT OF JOY***

There are a lot of people who are born again but still do not understand the workings of the fruit of joy and how it can translate into thanksgiving. I was a victim of such deprivation until I began to seek the face of God on how I could always give Him true praise in the midst of troubles.

Joy, as a fruit of the spirit, was deposited in our lives the moment we believed along with all the other fruits of the Spirit. But we will not enjoy the in-filling of this fruit until we ask God to help us stir up the fruit in our lives. We need to cultivate a life of joyfulness; a life that yearns to see the hand of God in all things. Not a life that complains or a life that wallows in self-pity. A life that will give thanks always is a life that is filled with boldness and has confidence in the power of God.

As I mentioned earlier, I did not understand how the joy of thanksgiving in the midst of trials works in my life until the Lord gave me that word “Acknowledge.” That was all I needed to stir up the fruit of Joy in my own life, and I can truly give thanks no matter what comes my way. In order to have a thankful life we first need to stir up the fruit of joy in our lives.

The seal of the Holy Spirit is a sure evidence of the presence of God in our lives and it is this presence of God that we need to acknowledge, appreciate, praise and give thanks to at all times. When we start to honor, treat with respect, praise and give thanks to the presence of God in our lives, then we will start to see Him display more and more of His presence in every area our lives and situations.

One important point to note is that we need to always make room for the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is a biblical fact that once we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ we are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit, but we need to allow the Holy Spirit take His rightful place of leadership in our lives. We need to cultivate a life of total submission to the Spirit of God which is what will secure for us a continuous life of thanksgiving.

The Holy Spirit will not act and we will not experience His active presence in our lives when we do not give Him the right to operate within us by following after His leadership. The Bible tells us that “He is the Spirit of truth and will lead us to all truth,” and this includes the truth of the knowledge of God. Remember, you cannot acknowledge a God you do not know.

## **LIVES OF MEN WHO GAVE THANKS TO GOD**

We need to consider men in the Bible who by acknowledging, praising and giving thanks to God have experienced great deliverance from their challenges. Remember that by praising God we move God to do the impossible in our lives and situations.

### *Acts 16:25-28*

*<sup>25</sup>About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing Hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. <sup>26</sup>Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. <sup>27</sup>The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. <sup>28</sup>But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"*

By singing hymns and praying, God rose to liberate and deliver Paul and Silas from chains and imprisonment. Paul and Silas understood the importance of acknowledging the living God and they saw results. If we read further in that passage, we'll realize that they were not just released from prison, those that imprisoned them apologized to them and gave them a glorious escort out of prison. They challenged God with their hymns and prayers and the Lord came to their rescue.

Another passage amongst many passages in the Bible that touches my life on the issue of thanksgiving is 2 Chronicles 20.

### *2 Chronicles 20:1-3, 14-15, 18-19, 21-25*

*After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to make war on Jehoshaphat.*

*<sup>2</sup>Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the sea. It is already in Hazazon Tamar" (that is, En Gedi). <sup>2</sup>Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to enquire of the Lord, and proclaimed a fast for all Judah.*

*<sup>14</sup>Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph, as he stood in the assembly.*

*<sup>15</sup>He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the Lord says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's.*

*<sup>18</sup>Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the Lord. <sup>19</sup>Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and praised the Lord, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.*

*<sup>21</sup>After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying*

*"Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever."*

<sup>22</sup>As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. <sup>23</sup>The men of Ammon and Moab rose up against the men of Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped destroy one another.

<sup>24</sup>When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked towards the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no-one escaped.

The passage above shows the power of praise; God delights in the praises of His people. Our true and sincere worship is a sweet-smelling aroma pleasing unto God. He is always moved to do the impossible when His children praise Him. Chains are broken, deliverance is seen, and those in bondage are set free in the midst of praising God. The Bible has revealed to us that God dwells in the praises of His children and remember that where the presence of God is there is liberty.

When we praise God, we usher His presence into our lives, and His presence brings light, and where the light of God is darkness flees. There is power in praising God. There is nothing our self-ability can give unto the Lord except to give Him true worship at all times.

#### *2 Samuel 6:12-16, 20-23*

<sup>12</sup>Now King David was told, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So, David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. <sup>13</sup>When those who were carrying the ark of the Lord had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. <sup>14</sup>David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the Lord with all his might, <sup>15</sup>while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of the trumpets.

<sup>16</sup>As the ark of the Lord was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, she despised him in her heart.

<sup>20</sup>When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, "How the King of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would."

<sup>21</sup>David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the Lord's people Israel - I will celebrate before the Lord. <sup>22</sup>I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor."

<sup>23</sup>And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

One thing that I have learned from this passage is that praising and dancing before the Lord knows no laws, no regulations, no conditions, and no boundaries. It is an expression of the heart that is filled with the knowledge and the awesomeness of the living God. David understood what the presence of God meant to his reign as King. The presence of God symbolized in the ark of God in the house of Obed-Edom brought bountiful blessings that everyone could see and speak about.

David understood the magnitude of prosperity, blessings, and abundance that was entering into the City of David and you tell this king not to praise God without restrictions. And we can see that God did not take lightly the fact that anyone would try to hinder the life that was pouring praises on Him. David merely rebuked Michal with words, but the Lord shut her womb for life. We should not let anyone, or anything stop us from praising God.

Just as the presence of God ushered in prosperity, blessings, abundance, victory, good health, breakthroughs into the house of Obed-Edom and in the City of David that people could see and talk about, so much more is the presence of God going to do in the lives of His children, those who worship God in truth and in spirit. And just like David rejoiced unhindered before the Lord God Almighty, so also should we continually rejoice and give thanks before the Lord for His presence in our lives. The Bible says this is the will of God for us in Christ Jesus.

### ***REASONS WHY WE NEED TO GIVE THANKS AT ALL TIMES***

#### *1 Thessalonians 5:18*

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

- 1) The first and most important reason why we must give thanks is that it is the will of God for us in Christ Jesus. It has been emphasized in the course of this study that thanksgiving is an acknowledgment of the Lord God Almighty in the fullness of His splendor, grace, love, mercy, and power. Thanksgiving is a way of inviting the presence of God into our lives, and this is pleasing to God because the Lord seeks to always be in fellowship with us.
- 2) Thanksgiving is food for our soul as children of the Most-High God. A heart that gives thanks is filled with the Joy of the Lord. Not the joy that comes from the things that are seen, but the joy that comes directly from the throne of God as a fruit of the spirit. A joyful heart harbors no bitterness, malice or hatred. A joyful heart expresses itself in love and thanksgiving. So, when the devil tries to take over your mind with bitterness, you need to combat it with a joyful heart and thanksgiving to God. No wonder Paul says, “we should speak with one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; always giving thanks to God the father for everything.”
- 3) Thanksgiving also helps overcome worry. When we understand thanks to God as acknowledging God in our situations and challenges, we rest assured that the presence of God will silence the storms of our lives. So, whatever we are going through once the presence of God is invited into the situation, the story must change for the better.
- 4) A heart that is filled with praises to God is always receptive to the blessings of God. A heart that will always give thanks to God, will always receive heavenly blessings. Remember when praises go up, blessings come down.
- 5) A life that will always give thanks is a life that will always conquer and will always be victorious in life's battles. Remember the stories we considered earlier; the victory of King Jehosaphat, the walls of Jericho, Paul and Silas' release from prison, and many other stories in the Bible and in our present-day lives. Praise and thanksgiving bring about divine liberty. It breaks the chains of bondage, and the people of God are at liberty to worship Him even more.

6) A life that gives thanks is filled with the Holy Spirit, and the fruits of the Spirit are deposited and displayed in such a life. A life that gives thanks is filled with and displays great Love and as mentioned earlier is filled with the Joy of the Lord. And because we acknowledge the Lord, He will always fight our battles for us and so we can enjoy divine peace. All other fruits of the spirit are evident in our lives.

The Lord seeks true worshipers, a people who will worship and praise Him, giving thanks at all times in truth and in spirit and in all circumstances. The Lord desires people in whom, and through whom He can display His majesty and power as in the days of old. God said in His words that "If His people will not praise Him, He will raise stones to praise Him in their stead." Are you going to allow the Lord to replace you with stones? It is time for the people of God to give Him unconditional praise.

David understood the importance of giving thanks to God and that inspired Him to write the book of Psalms. He acknowledged the Lord in all his ways, and he prospered. No wonder he was called a man after God's heart. David was a man just like you and me, but he was able to distinguish himself and had a special place in the heart of God because he lived a life of thanksgiving to God.

David made God the number one priority in his life, and God, in turn, gave him a special place in His program. David was no ordinary king; he had a special position in the mind and agenda of God.

You and I also have an open invitation to hold a special place in the purpose and plan of God if only we can give Him a special place in our lives. Let us start to acknowledge and praise God in our lives, let us start making Him the daily V.I.P (Very Important Personality) of our lives and our story will not remain the same. God is seeking true worshipers to bless; surely, I will be one of them.

[Back to Table of Content](#)