

Receive His Gift

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Pokea Zawadi Yake

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Wa Akidi ya Mitume Kumi na Wawili

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You are a beloved daughter of God, you are a cherished son of God, and He has gifted you His perfect, holy Son.

Wewe ni binti mpendwa wa Mungu, wewe ni mwana mpendwa wa Mungu, na Yeye amekuza-wadia wewe na Mwanawe, Mkamilifu.

Gift Giving

Gift giving is a social custom that spans all cultures, civilisations, and millennia. Throughout time, people have given gifts to each other to strengthen relationships, express love and gratitude, and mark important events like weddings, birthdays, and holidays. And humans are not the only ones of God's creations to give gifts to each other! Among many other examples we could point to, penguins are known to give shiny pebbles to their prospective mates, and bonobos (cousins of the chimpanzee) give fruit to expand their circle of friendship.

What gifts have you given? Think of a time when you found—or made—the perfect gift for someone you love. You just knew the gift was exactly what this loved one wanted and something they would treasure. What was the gift? Was it for your mother? a friend? your child? a teacher? your grandfather? How did you feel when you found this gift? How did you feel when you thought about this person you love opening the gift? Similarly, when did someone give you the perfect gift, and what was it like to receive it?

My Father's Gift to Me

When I was about seven years old, living with my parents in Arabia, a children's film called *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* was released. The

Utoaji Zawadi

Utoaji zawadi ni desturi ya kijamii ambayo inahusisha tamaduni zote, ustaarabu na milenia. Kwa nyakati zote watu wamepeana zawadi wao kwa wao kuimarisha uhusiano, kuonyesha upendo, shukrani, na kuadhimisha matukio muhimu kama vile harusi, tarehe za kuzaliwa na sikukuu. Na wanadamu siyo viumbe wa Mungu pekee wanaopeana zawadi! Miongoni mwa mifano mingine mingi ambayo tunaweza kuangazia, ni pengwini ambao wanafahamika kwa kutoa kokoto zinazong'ara kwa wenzi wao watarajiwa, bonobo (binamu wa sokwe) hupeana tunda ili kupanua wigo wa urafiki.

Je, wewe ni zawadi gani umetoa? Fikiria wakati ulipopata—au kufanya—ile zawadi kamilifu kwa mtu unayempenda. Wewe ulijua zawadi hiyo ilikuwa haswa ndicho mpendwa huyu alikitaka na kitu ambacho angekitamani. Ilikuwa zawadi gani? Ilikuwa ni kwa ajili ya mama yako? Rafiki? Mtoto wako? Mwalimu? Babu yako? Ulijisikiaje ulipoipata zawadi hii? Ulijisikiaje wakati ulipofikiria kuhusu mtu huyu unayempenda akifungua zawadi hiyo? Vivyo hivyo, ni lini mtu alikupawewe zawadi kamilifu, na ulihisija ulipoipokea?

Zawadi ya Baba Yangu Kwangu Mimi

Nilipokuwa na umri wa miaka saba hivi, niliishi na wazazi wangu huko Arabia, filamu ya watoto *iitwayo Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* ilia-

film is about a magical car that can drive itself, float on water, and even fly! I knew that back home in England they made a miniature toy car just like Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, and oh, how I wanted one! You could pull a lever, and the toy car's wings would pop out! My father went on a business trip to England and asked if I wanted him to bring anything back for me, and I told him how very much I would like to have one of those Chitty Chitty Bang Bang cars.

He came back from his trip, and no car appeared. I was very sad and thought he must have forgotten. But about 10 days later was my birthday, and a little package, beautifully wrapped, was waiting for me. With great anticipation, and hardly daring to hope too much, I opened the gift and found my car. I was so happy that I cried. I pulled the lever, and the wings popped out, just like the car in the film! How I thanked my father for this most treasured gift. I played with that car for years and kept it for many more. I think my dad loved giving me that car at least as much as I loved receiving it.

Giving, Accepting and Opening, and Receiving

We can think of gift giving as having three parts to it:

The giving of the gift, where the giver selects, makes, or prepares the gift and presents it to the loved one. This involves thoughtful intention on the part of the giver to give something meaningful.

The accepting and opening of the gift, when the recipient accepts the gift from the giver—often with expressions of surprise, gratitude, and excitement—before opening it, sometimes untying a bow and unwrapping the package to discover what the gift is.

And then there is perhaps the most important part, the receiving of the gift. To receive a gift sincerely given is so much more than accepting and then opening it. It is more, even, than recognising the worth of the gift and expressing gratitude to the giver. To truly receive a gift, we come to value it for ourselves, put it to full use in

chiliwa. Filamu hii ni kuhusu gari la kimaajabu ambalo linaweza kujiendesha lenyewe, kuelea juu ya maji na hata kuruka angani! Nilijua kule nyumbani Uingereza walitengeneza gari ndogo mwanasesere kama Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, na ah, nilitamani kuwa na moja! Ungeweza kuvuta wenzo, na mabawa ya gari mwanasesere yangejitokeza! Baba yangu alienda Uingereza kwa safari ya kikazi na akaniuliza kama ningetaka yeye aniletee chochote kutoka huko, na nikamwambia ni kiasi gani ningetamani kupata moja ya yale magari ya Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

Alirudi nyumbani kutoka safari yake, na hakuna gari lililoonekana. Nilisikitika sana na nikafikiri lazima atakuwa alisahau. Lakini karibia siku 10 hivi ilikuwa siku yangu ya kuzaliwa, na paketi ndogo iliyofungwa kwa maridadi, ilikuwa ikinisubiri. Kwa matarajio makubwa, na vigumu kuthubutu kutarajia mengi sana, nilifungua ile zawadi yangu na nikakuta gari yangu. Nilifurahi sana kwamba nililia. Nilivuta wenzo, na mabawa yakachomoza, kama vile ile gari kwenye filamu. Nilimshukuru sana baba yangu kwa zawadi hii kuu ya thamani. Nilicheza na gari ile kwa miaka mingi na nikaiweka kwa miaka mingine mingi zaidi. Nafikiri baba yangu alipenda kunipa gari lile kama vile mimi nilivyopenda kuipokea.

Kutoa, Kukubali na Kufungua na Kupokea

Tunaweza kufikiri juu ya utoaji wa zawadi kama una sehemu tatu:

Utoaji wa zawadi, ambapo mtoaji anachagua, anatengeneza au anaiandaa zawadi hiyo, na kuiwasilisha kwa mpendwa wake. Hii inahusishia nia ya kufikiria kwa upendo wa mtoaji kutoa kitucha maana.

Kukubali na kufungua ile zawadi, pale mpokeaji anapokubali zawadi kutoka kwa mtoaji—mara nyingi akiwa na onyesho la mshangao, shukrani, na shauku—kabla ya kuifungua, wakati mwingine kufungua kamba na kufungua kifurushi ili kugundua ni zawadi gani.

Na kisha pengine kuna sehemu muhimu sana, ni kulekupokelewa kwa zawadi. Kupokea zawadi iliyotolewa kwa dhiti ni zaidi sana kuliko kuikubali na kisha kuifungua. Ni zaidi, hata, kuliko kutambua thamani ya zawadi na kuelezea shukrani kwa mtoaji. Kwa kweli kupokea zawadi, tunakuja kuithamini kwa ajili yetu wenyewe, kui-

our lives, and then remember with thankfulness the giver.

Receiving a gift is not passive but an intentional and meaningful process that goes far beyond merely opening a package. To receive is to appreciate and connect with both the gift and the heart of the giver in a way that strengthens the bonds between the giver and receiver. Thinking of that toy car brings back a host of golden memories, as I feel once again my father's deep love and care for me, represented by that gift and countless other generous acts.

Our Heavenly Father's Gifts

Our Heavenly Father has innumerable gifts of light and truth prepared to shower down on each of us, His treasured children. They flow from our Bounteous Giver like a wellspring in the wilderness from His benevolent heart. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." In our covenant bond with the Father, He is ever the Giver and we the humble recipient.

The Greatest of All the Father's Gifts, Through Which All Others Flow

But we could receive nothing without the greatest of all the Father's gifts, His beloved Lamb, His Son, Jesus Christ. All of our Father's gifts flow from and are activated by the Saviour's willing offering in Gethsemane and on the cross and His triumphant Resurrection. Jesus Christ, our merciful Redeemer, is the supreme gift from our Father of lights. "In the gift of his Son hath God prepared [for us] a more excellent way."

One All-Encompassing Gift of Eternal Truth

I would like to talk about one all-encompassing gift of eternal truth that underpins our ability to receive all else our Father desires to endow us with—a vital gift of knowledge that, when fully accepted and received deep in the soul, contextualises the joys and hardships of life and our unan-

weka katika matumizi kamili katika maisha yetu na kisha tunamkumbuka kwa shukrani mtoaji.

Kupokea zawazi siyo mchakato baridi bali ni mchakato wa kusudi na maana ambao unaenda mbali zaidi ya kufungua kifurushi. Kupokea ni kuthamini na kuunganika na vyote viwili zawadi na moyo wa mtoaji katika njia ambayo inaimarisha muunganiko kati ya yule mtoaji na mpokeaji. Nikifikiria juu ya ile gari mwanasesere hunirudishia lundo la kumbukumbu za dhahabu, ninapohisi kwa mara nyingine tena upendo wa kina wa baba yangu na kunijali kwake, kulikowakilishwa na zawadi ile na vitendo vingine vingi vya ukarimu.

Zawadi za Baba Yetu wa Mbinguni

Baba yetu wa Mbingunianazo zawadi zisizo na idadi za nuru na kweli zilizoandaliwa kumwagwa chini juu ya kila mmoja wetu, watoto Wake wa thamani. Zinatiririka kutoka Mtoaji Mkarimu kama kisima cha maji kilicho nyikani kutoka kwenye moyo Wake mzuri. "Kila kutoa kuliko kwema, na kila kitolewacho kilicho kamili, na huja chini kutoka kwa Baba wa mianga." Katika muunganiko wetu wa kiagano na Baba, Yeye daima ndiye mtoaji nasi tu wapokeaji wanyenyekevu.

Zawadi Kuu Kuliko Zawadi Zote za Baba, Ambapo Kwayo Zawadi Nyingine Zote Hutiririka

Lakini tusingeweza kupokea chochote pasipo zawadi iliyo kuu kuliko zawadi zote za Baba, Mwanakondoo Wake mpendwa, Mwana-we, Yesu Kristo. Zawadi zote za Baba hutiririka kutoka kwa na huhuishwa na matoleo ya hiari ya Mwokozi katika Gethsemane na juu ya msalaba na Ufufuko Wake wa ushindi. Yesu Kristo, Mkombozi wetu mwenye rehema, ndiye zawadi kuu kutoka kwa Baba wa mianga. "Katika zawadi ya Mwanawe Mungu ametuandalia [sisi] njia iliyo bora."

Zawadi Moja Inayojumuisha Yote ya Ukweli wa Milele

Ningependa kuzungumza kuhusu zawadi moja inayojumuisha-yote ya ukweli wa milele ambayo inatoa uwezo wetu wa kupokea mengine yote ambayo Baba anatamani kutupatia—zawadi muhimu ya maarifa ambayo ikikubaliwa kwa ukamilifu na kupokelewa kwa kina ndani ya naf-

swered questions: It is that we really are God's children. That truth is breathtaking! Stunning! And it is not figurative.

Imagine you are hearing this for the first time! You really are His cherished daughter. You really are His precious son. And the path you are on is His plan of happiness. With His omniscient love, He knows exactly who you were before you were sent to earth and what you have experienced so far in your mortal life, and He has mercifully planned for your every tomorrow. And oh, how He yearns to one day have you return to Him, to receive the supreme intent of all His beautiful gifts, eternal life with Him.

The question is not whether this gift of truth is real but whether we will discover and receive it. The gift has already been bestowed upon us by the Father. The price for the ultimate purpose of this gift has already been paid by the Saviour. But if you have been taught this, said this, and sung this truth for years, maybe the awesome wonder of it has long since faded and you no longer feel its power and peace.

If this priceless gift of understanding—and all the goodness, peace, and hope that flow from it—is left unaccepted, unopened, and unreceived, what a terrible loss for us! What a sadness for the Giver! “For what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift.”

I invite you to receive, either for the first time or to a greater extent than ever before, the magnificent realisation that you truly are God's beloved child. You must undo the bow, tear off the wrapping paper, open the box, and actively receive with grateful humility a true, pure understanding of this foundational truth. The Holy Spirit can bear witness to your heart that you are indeed a child of the Most High.

When you welcome this majestic reality into your very soul and feel both the comfort and the thrill of it, your entire paradigm shifts! You can feel His love, hear His voice, and recognise His hand, no matter what is happening, or not happening, in your life. You can redefine how you see yourself and others. Your covenant bond with your Saviour becomes even stronger, and

si, inaweka mazingira ya shangwe na magumu ya maisha, na maswali yetu yasiyojibiwa: Sisi hakika ni watoto wa Mungu. Ukweli huo unasisimua! Unashangaza! Na hii siyo ya kiisitari.

Fikiria unasikia hili kwa mara ya kwanza! Wewe hakika ni binti Yake wa thamani. Wewe hakika ni mwana Wake wa thamani. Njia uliomo sasa ni mpango Wake wa furaha. Pamoja na upendo Wake unaojua yote, Yeye anajua hasa wewe ulikuwa nani kabla haujatumiwa huku ulimwengu, kile ilichopitia kufika hapa katika maisha yako ya duniani, na Yeye amepanga kwa neema kwa ajili ya kila kesho yako. Na lo, anatamani kiasi gani kwamba siku moja urejee Kwake, ili upokee dhamira kuu ya zawadi Zake zote nzuri, uzima wa milele pamoja na Yeye.

Swali siyo kama zawadi hii ya ukweli ipo bali kama tutaigundua na kuipokea. Zawadi tayari imetunukiwa juu yetu na Baba. Bei ya dhumuni muhimu la zawadi tayari imekwisha kulipwa na Mwokozi. Lakini kama umekuwa ukifundishwa hili, kusema hili, na ukaimba ukweli huu kwa miaka mingi, huenda ajabu yake ya kupendeza imefika kitambo sana na huhisi tena nguvu na amani yake.

Ikiwa hii zawadi ya thamani mno ya uelewa—na mema yote, amani na tumaini ambavyo hutiririka kutoka kwayo—inaachwa bila kukubaliwa, bila kufunguliwa na bila kupokelewa, ni hasara ilioje kwetu! Ni huzuni iliyoje kwa Mtoaji! “Kwani itamfaidia mtu nini kama zawadi imewe kwa juu yake, na hapati zawadi hiyo? Tazama, hafurahii katika kile ambacho kimetolewa kwake, wala hamfurahii yeye aliyetoa zawadi.

Ninakualika kupokea iwe kwa mara ya kwanza au kwa ukubwa mpana kuliko hapo awali, ukuu wa ufahamu kwamba wewe hakika ni mtoto mpendwa wa Mungu. Lazima ufungue kamba, uichane karatasi iliyofungiwa, fungua boksi na kwa shauku pokea kwa shukrani yenye unyenyekevu wa kweli, uelewa safi wa ukweli wa kimsingi. Roho Mtakatifu anaweza kutoa ushuhudia kwenye moyo wako kwamba wewe hakika ni mtoto wa yule Aliye Juu Sana.

Unapokaribisha uhalisi huu mkuu katika nafsi yako na kuhisi vyote faraja na msisimko wake, kielelezo chako kinabadilika kabisa! Unaweza kuhisi upendo Wake, kusikia sauti Yake, na kuutambua mkono Wake, bila kujali kile kinachotokea au kisichotokea katika maisha yako. Unaweza kufafanua upya jinsi unavyojiona mwenyewe na unavyowaona wengine. Kifungo

through the lens of this sweet gift, life takes on new brilliance, beauty, and hope.

Please, will you pray to understand if you are truly receiving this transformative knowledge deep in your soul? Will you please accept the gift? Will you do so more deeply, more freely, more abundantly than you ever have before—and in so doing be showered with all of those other gifts that come with it?

Receiving This Gift of Eternal Truth

You may be wondering, “What do I have todoto receive this gift from God?” Well, actually, nothing. It is a gift from the Giver. It is simply a fact. Just let it in. You are His child. You are beloved of Him. Do not complicate it. Do not block the receiving of this gift with thoughts that you are somehow undeserving. The reality is none of us is “deserving”—all the Father’s gifts are received only through the merits, mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, but how His generous heart longs for each of His children to receive them! Then, as your new or renewed understanding dawns on you, rejoice in thanking the Giver of this gift.

Since finding my faith in my mid-20s, I have awakened to the realisation that I truly am a son of God. The more fully I internalise this gift, the more keenly I know who I am and how completely I am loved. Some things that have helped me grow in understanding are the words of scripture, my patriarchal blessing, temple worship, serving others, expressing gratitude, and sacred prayer with my Father. I marvel at how earlier sorrow, pain, and grief in my life would have been reframed, soothed, and much of it overcome had I known this beautiful truth.

Come unto Christ and Receive

Moroni exhorts us to “deny not the gifts of God” but to “come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift.” You can come to Christ with confidence in His loving-kindness and receive all His gifts of joy, peace, hope, light, truth, revelation, knowledge, and wisdom—with your head held high, your arms outstretched, and

cha agano lako na Mwokozi wako huwa imara zaidi, na kupitia lenzi za hii zawadi tamu, maisha huchukua uangavu mpya, urembo, na tumaini.

Tafadhali, je, utasali ili kuelewa kama hakika unapokea maarifa haya yenye kubadilisha kwa kina nafsini mwako? Tafadhali kubali zawadi hii? Je, utafanya hivyo kwa kina zaidi, kwa uhuru zaidi, kwa wingi zaidi kuliko hata hapo kabla-na kwa kufanya hivyo ukanyeshewe pamoja na zile zawadi nyingi ambazo huja pamoja na hizo?

Kupokea Zawadi Hii ya Ukweli wa Milele

Unaweza kuwa unashangaa, “Ni nini nina-paswakufanyaili kupokea zawadi hii kutoka kwa Mungu? Kwa kweli, hasa, hakuna chochote. Ni zawadi kutoka kwa Mtoaji. Ni ukweli rahisi. Iache tu iingie ndani. Wewenimtoto Wake. Wewe ni mpendwa Wake. Usiifanye kuwa tatanishi. Usizuie upokeaji wa zawadi hii kwa mawazo kwamba wewe kwa namna fulani ustahili. Ukweli ni kwamba hakuna ye yote miongoni mwetu “an-ayestahili”—zawadi zote za Baba zinapokelewa tu kupitia fadhila, rehema na neema za Masiya Mtakatifu, lakini ni kwa jinsi gani moyo Wake wa ukarimu anatamani watoto Wake wazipokee! Ki-sha, kama uelewa wako mpya au uliofanywa upya hupambazuka kwako, furahia katika kumshukuru Mtoaji wa zawadi hii.

Tangu kupata imani yangu katika miaka yangu ya 20 na, nimeziduka kwenye utambuzi kwamba kwa kweli mimi ni mwana wa Mungu. Kwa ukamilifu zaidi ninapoifanya zawadi hii kuwa yangu, ndivyo zaidi ninavyojua kwa makini kuwa mimi ni nani na jinsi kikamilifu nina-vyopendwa. Baadhi ya vitu ambavyo vimenisaidia kukua katika uelewa ni maneno ya maandiko, baraka yangu ya kipatriaki, kuabudu hekaluni, kuwatumikia wengine, kuelezea shukrani, na sala takatifu kwa Baba yangu. Ninashangaa jinsi huzuni ya awali, maumivu na uchungu katika maisha yangu vingeweza kubadilishwa na kutulizwa na mengi yake hushinda kama ningejua ukweli huu mzuri.

Njooni kwa Kristo na Mpokee

Moroni anatusihi “tusikatae karama za Mungu” bali “mje kwa Kristo, na kushikilia kila karama nzuri.” Mnaweza kuja kwa Kristo kwa kujiamini katika upendo Wake wa ukarimu na kupokea karama Zake zote za shangwe, amani, tumaini, nuru, ukweli, ufunuo, maarifa na hekima—na kichwa chako kikiinuliwa juu, miko-

your hands open, ready to receive. And you can receive these gifts because you are secure and grounded in the knowledge that you are a beloved daughter of God, you are a cherished son of God, and He has gifted you His perfect, holy Son to redeem you, justify you, and sanctify you.

You are a child of God. This is not just a nice song we sing. Will you please accept, open, and receive this gift of knowledge and understanding from Him? Will you hold it close as the precious treasure it is? Re-receive this gift, or perhaps truly receive it for the very first time, and let it transform every aspect of your life. This is the more excellent way God has prepared for you through the gift of His Son. You really are that you might have joy! In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

no kunyooshwa na viganja vikiwa wazi, tayari kupokea. Na unaweza kupokea zawadi hizi kwa sababu wewe uko salama na umejengwa katika maarifa ya kwamba wewe ni binti mpendwa wa Mungu, wewe ni mwana mpendwa wa thamani wa Mungu, na amekupa wewe zawadi ya Mwana-we mkamilifu mtakatifu ili akukomboa, kukuhalalisha na kukutakasa.

Wewe ni mtoto wa Mungu!” Huu siyo tu wimbo mzuri tunaoimba. Je, tafadhali utakubali, utafungua na kupokea zawadi hii ya maarifa na uelewa kutoka kwake Yeye? Je, utaikumbatia kwa karibu kama hazina ya thamani kwani ndiyo ilivyo? Ipokee upya zawadi hii au pengine hakika ipokee kwa mara ya kwanza kabisa, na acha ibadilishe kila kipengele cha maisha yako. Hii ni njia iliyo bora zaidi ambayo Mungu ameandaa kwa ajili yako kupitia Mwanawe. Wewe kweli upo ili upate kuwa na shangwe! Katika jina la Yesu Kristo, amina.