

## **The War of Hearts: An Examination of the Menace of Corruption in Kenya**

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### **ABSTRACT**

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*Since its independence to date, Kenya has had numerous scandals of corruption and over the years, it has ranked among the most corrupt countries in Africa and the world. While trying to address the problem, numerous legislations have been enacted and institutions and agencies established but this has not yielded the desired results. This article argues that the failure of the various laws and institutions to effectively address the problem is because they have not identified and addressed the fundamental cause of corruption, which is sin. The purpose of this article is to rethink and assess the various approaches used to address corruption, define the root cause of corruption, and offer biblical and theological remedies to the problem as a contribution to the current discourse on the subject. To come up with this paper, written materials in the form of books, journal articles, newspapers, and other reports have been studied to gain a greater understanding of corruption and its pervasiveness in society. This was coupled with the writers' experiences as students and teachers of theology. It was found that no lasting solution has been found despite the myriad efforts made by the government and Kenya continues to struggle with an ever-growing corruption case-load which continues to hamper the economic, social, and political development and wellbeing of the citizens. The study found that corruption is a sin and arises from humanity's nature. Unless the heart is dealt with, all other efforts at fighting it will not succeed. It is therefore recommended that the Church should take the lead in the battle against corruption since it is both a moral and spiritual problem. The Word of God and prayer will go a long way in dealing with this sin. The transformation of society will begin with the transformation of hearts.*

**Key Words:** *Corruption, development, sin, transformation, Word of God, prayer*

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### **Introduction**

Kenya has been ranked among those countries said to be the most corrupt in Africa and the world. Since independence, the Kenyan public has been inundated with press reports of

embarrassing corruption scandals including the recent National Youth Service, the Kenya Power & Lighting Company, and the Kenya Pipeline corruption cases (Cytonn Weekly, 2018). Transparency International (TI) has ranked Kenya to be between position 145 and 147 out of 180 countries on its Corruption Perception Index (CPI) scale for consecutive years between 2003 and 2017 scoring between 2.0 and 2.2 out of 10 (Transparency International, 2020). This indicates that Kenya is only ahead of mostly war-torn countries like Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and Somalia. The TI's local chapter (TI-Kenya) has reported that an estimate of 16 bribes per month is paid by the average urban Kenyan. The TI's reports on the scope of Kenyan corruption status testify that corruption is still very widespread in society (Kichwen, 2017)

Corruption is defined under Section 2 of the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act (Chapter 65 of the Laws of Kenya) to include misappropriation or embezzlement of public funds, bribery and fraud, abuse of office, and offenses that involve dishonesty with taxes, rates, or levies imposed under the Act or any other legislation. It also includes secret inducements for advice, conflicts of interest, acquiring, mortgaging, or damaging of public property, dealing with suspect property, and abuse of office. Further, attempted corruption or an economic crime is also corruption. An economic crime is a crime of dishonesty with the maintenance or protection of public revenue as provided under any legislation. Having suspect or unexplained assets at a time when one is being reasonably suspected of corruption, and whose value is not proportionate to the suspected person's known sources of income, may also lead to a charge of corruption. Public funds, as per the Public Audit Act (No. 34 of 2015) include all funds that are possessed or distributed by a state organ such as the county or national governments as well as intergovernmental agencies. It also comprises funds mobilized by a private agency under statutory authority or money held by a public entity or state organ in trust for a third party or any other money that can generate government liability.

According to TI (2021), corruption is the "abuse of entrusted power for private gain." It entails such acts as demands or receipts of favors of money in exchange for services. When politicians or other officers grant contracts or public jobs to their sponsors, friends, or families, they are engaging in corruption. So are corporations when they bribe officials for lucrative deals. Corruption may occur anywhere including in courts, in businesses, in civil societies, and even across all sectors of health, education, and infrastructure (Transparency International, 2021).

Cytonn Weekly (2018) classifies corruption into three categories: (1) Grand corruption which entails acts committed by high-level government officials and which disrupts the proper functioning of the state and distorts policies, and which enables those in leadership to obtain selfish benefit at the expense of the public good; (2) Petty corruption which consists of abuse of power by low and mid-level public officials in their service to ordinary citizens in such places as police departments, schools, hospitals, and other government offices; and (3) Political corruption which includes manipulation of rules of procedure, policies and institutions in the distribution or allocation of resources by political decision-makers, who abuse their positions to sustain their wealth, power, and status. The Cytonn Weekly (2018) shows that these types of corruption have existed in Kenya for not less than four decades and have served to inhibit Kenya's development.

Wrong (2009) reports that by the time the third President of Kenya H.E. Mwai Kibaki took over the reins of power from H.E Daniel Arap Moi, the nation, which had boasted as one of the high-profile nations on the continent of Africa at the time of its independence in 1963, was at its lowest; it had veered off the course and was lagging at the bottom of the international league tables. At independence, it was at par with Malaysia in terms of average per capita income, but

by the year 2002, Malaysia was ten times better. The reason for this was that the Moi regime had turned the country into '*nchi ya kitu kidogo*' or the 'nation of the little something' as a bribe had come to be dubbed. Kenya could well boast of having had a large middle class, but the gap between those earning an income and the poor mostly living in slums was huge. Kenya had become one of the most disappointing performers in sub-Saharan Africa as was reported by the Financial Times in 2002, a day after the general election. Systemic corruption and patronage were so ingrained that they were snuffing out the very life of the country. From petty bribes to policemen and local councilors; to jobs being given to undeserving people by the civil service and politicians on ethnic grounds; to massive scams by the ruling elite; all these had become the order of the day. Tribalism was at its peak. Transparency International (TI) had reported that in the 1990s, Kenya trailed near the bottom on the corruption index and was only less corrupt than Nigeria or Pakistan. "Eating," as looting the public resources was referred to, had become part and parcel of the nation (Wrong, 2009).

Upon taking over leadership, H.E. President Kibaki announced his commitment to root out corruption from Kenya and he made several steps to show this commitment. Among these was the appointment of a Permanent Secretary in Charge of Governance and Ethics who sat in State House (Wrong, 2009) and the beginning of the enactment of several legislations, all meant to wage war on corruption. These included the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act, 2003; The Public Officer Ethics Act, Chapter 183 of the Laws of Kenya; Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2009 (revised in 2016), among others. Several institutions and agencies were established as well including the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (which was a successor of the Kenya Anti Corruption Commission (KACC)), the Financial Recovery Centre (FRC), and the National Land Commission, in addition to the Judiciary, the Police Force, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI), among others.

During President Kibaki's second term, and in pursuit of the war against corruption, several other legislations were enacted or reviewed. Top among them was the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, which was a review of the 1963 Constitution. In its Article 10, it entailed the national values of governance including the rule of law, human dignity, public participation, equity, social justice, equality, inclusiveness, non-discrimination, human rights, and protection of the marginalized. Additionally, good governance, transparency, integrity, accountability, and sustainable development were cited as values of good governance. Chapter 6 thereof provided the guiding principles of leadership as integrity, and prohibited practices such as discrimination and bias in recruitment, nepotism, and favoritism as well as conflict of interest by public officers. Chapter 6 further provided that in the case where a public officer is given a gift in the course of his duty, the same shall be delivered to the state unless it is exempted by an Act of Parliament. It also prohibited state officers from holding bank accounts outside of Kenya. Article 201 provided for the principles of equity and accountability in the use of public funds.

The legislation and anti-corruption agencies were meant to wage an all-out war on corruption. However, from the look of things, the war does not appear to have been won. For instance, in a 2018 survey, the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission found that there had been a rise in people who paid bribes to obtain services in public offices from 46% posted in 2016 to 62% in 2018; that 27% of those interviewed said they had been explicitly asked for a bribe; 9.8% implicitly asked for a bribe while 2.1% offered to pay to obtain services in government offices. The survey reported that the Kenya Police Service was the most corrupt agency in Kenya, followed by public hospitals and Kenya Revenue Authority. The National Land Commission, the National Transport and Safety Authority, and Immigration Department

followed suit in that order. County governments were also found to be corrupt with Madera and Kisumu topping the chart in 2018 while Turkana and Nairobi were ranked as most corrupt in 2016. In that report, corruption emerged as the leading problem facing the country at 46.6% followed by poverty (37%), unemployment (32.2%), unfavorable economic conditions (22.2%), and political instability (21.8%) (Standard Digital, 2018). It is important to note that despite the many laws, agencies, and regulations to deal with corruption, the situation has not changed. It looks like corruption has become more entrenched in the fabric of Kenyan society. The question one may ask is; why has the law failed in addressing the problem of corruption in this country? The answer the writers propose is that the law cannot legislate on morality. Morality has to do with the heart. The law cannot change people's hearts.

The purpose of this paper is to unravel the menace of corruption in Kenya, its real root cause, and what can be the ultimate and most effective response to it. The specific objectives of the study were to determine the efficacy of the fight against corruption in Kenya; determine the root cause of the vice, and recommend strategies to curb it.

### **The Problem of Corruption**

As explained by Otenyo (1998), corruption is a complex issue, and borrowing from James C. Scott, he defines it as a deviation from certain standards of behavior. The criteria used to establish these standards include such notions as public interest, public opinion, and legal norms. In other words, some form of general will can be ascertained in a given polity through careful research into its socio-political behavior patterns. Corruption at the civil service level will therefore include such acts as an exchange of gifts, wealth, or assets to influence the decision-making by a governing body. It will also comprise such acts as misappropriating public funds, awarding contracts to unqualified tenderers, and in some cases, aspects of immorality (Otenyo, 1998).

According to the 2018 biennial PricewaterhouseCoopers Global, Economic Crime Survey ("GECS"), 37% of those interviewed stated that in the previous two years, fraud was the most disruptive economic crime, and it had cost them at least ten million shillings (USD 100,000.) Within that period, fraud had an index rate of 37% and was behind asset misappropriation as the second most prevalent economic crime. It was most prevalent in the financial services industry and had a 65% incidence rate and hence was the most prevalent form of economic crime, ahead of cybercrime and asset misappropriation which had for a long time been the leading forms of economic crimes in that industry. Further, it was found that second to asset misappropriation was consumer fraud as the most prevalent economic crime in Kenya with an incidence rate of 37% (Thoithi, 2018).

This is supported by the statement of Mulinge and Lesetedi (1998) who noted that in Africa, corruption is among the major impediments to social, economic, and political development. They define corruption as a form of antisocial behavior by a person or group of individuals that confers an unjust benefit to them as against another person or group. That behavior is usually in contravention of existing legal norms or moral ethos of the land and most likely it interferes with the capacity of the established legitimate authorities to accord the full material and spiritual well-being of all members of society in an equitable or just manner. Such behavior includes the use of the public office or authority, in contravention of the established rules, and a manner that gains for the person private monetary rewards or other privileges at the expense of public good (Mulinge & Lesetedi, 1998).

Due to the weakness of the judicial system and a lack of strong institutions, the enforcement of anti-corruption legislation in Kenya is inadequate. Additionally, the multi-sectoral approach adopted by the 2010 Constitution has been hampered by bureaucracy, differing priorities by the various agencies as well as institutional problems. Some of the institutions have also been reported to be very corrupt. And of course, it is difficult for a corrupt institution to help curb corruption. Furthermore, despite all these legislations and policies, as well as the establishment and empowerment of anti-fraud and anti-corruption institutions, the arrests and eviction rate has been very low.

Furthermore, since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, governments all over the globe instituted curfews, roadblocks, and other restrictions to alleviate the spread of the infection. However, Kenyan police who were mandated to manage the roadblocks were reported to demand and receive bribes to allow people to pass through the roadblocks or travel past the curfew hours. Transparency International called the corruption by police during the pandemic a pandemic in itself in their report dated 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020. Beforehand, on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the institution had made a public media release citing cases of corruption not only by the police but also by officers in public hospitals who would turn away sick people for no reason or for such reasons as the inability to buy or failure to wear face masks. Patients with chronic non-communicable diseases would be denied access to treatment in referral hospitals due to the Ministry of Health directive on restricted movement hence leading to desperation. Further, isolation centers were being used to detain non-sick persons who would be charged USD 20 per day failing which they would not be released; and yet this was exposing them to a high risk of contracting the virus (Masinde, 2020).

Recently, the nation was shocked to hear from President Uhuru Kenyatta that 2 billion shillings are lost every day through corruption. This shows how endemic corruption has affected the development of the country. A more recent case involved Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA) that was tasked to supply medical equipment to help the government fight the Covid-19 Pandemic. Billions of shillings were provided for this. It turned out that billions of Kenyan shillings were lost through dubious procurement processes where contracts were awarded to companies that are not credible. KEMSA was on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020 reported having rejected an offer to procure personal protective equipment (PPEs) for use by medical personnel at Sh. 4,500/ and instead bought them at Sh. 9,000/ per unit. This cost the taxpayer at least Sh. 1.6 billion. It was also reported that the Covid-19 Emergency Response team allowed firms to deliver supplies before they even negotiated prices. During a Parliamentary Committee meeting, it was also established that only 13 out of the 102 firms that traded with KEMSA were tax compliant (Nyamori, 2021).

In their report on corruption in 2015, the Task Force on the Review of the Legal, Policy and Institutional Framework for Fighting Corruption in Kenya noted that the fight against corruption was being hampered by several challenges including; lack of public awareness, inconsistent political will, a culture that tolerated corruption, weakness of the law enforcement agencies to enforce anti-corruption laws, negative ethnicity and non-regulation of campaign financing. Additionally, due to weak institutions and systems, devolution inadvertently worked to create more opportunities for corruption – effectively devolving corruption. Further, due to the expanded human rights entrenched in the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, and the affordability of the public interest litigation regime, there was unabated latitude for litigants who would use the judicial system to intervene and block investigations against them. Notably, the judicial system

would be so slow that timely conclusion of corruption and economic crime cases was an uphill task (Task Force Report, 2015, pp. 6-7).

The EACC in its 2016-2017 annual report cited the following as additional challenges in its war against corruption; budgetary constraints and inadequate financial capacity suffered by the agency; inadequate human resources capacity to enable devolution of the agency's services to the grassroots; slow judicial processes sometimes lasting up to ten years to determine corruption cases, as well as adverse court decisions; weak legal framework, especially under the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2011 and the Leadership and Integrity Act, 2012, which were diluted by the law-makers, for instance, by not granting the commission power to prosecute corruption cases; and a lack of a national anti-corruption policy which made the efforts of the agencies endowed with the mandate to deal with corruption uncoordinated and varied. Furthermore, the commission noted that it was unable to enforce the implementation of its corruption prevention recommendation as it had not been granted the power or mandate to do so. It was further affected by the politicization of its leadership and integrity mandate. It further noted that it was proving difficult to curb corruption in the public sector because government agencies were not enforcing their codes of conduct (EACC Report 2017, 83).

### **Results of Corruption**

Countries like Kenya are affected by the menace in many ways. Corruption is an obstacle to democracy and the rule of law on the political front. When public offices are used for private advantage to the disadvantage of the citizens, they lose their legitimacy. In any democracy and especially so in an emerging one, this is very harmful as it is extremely difficult in a corrupt environment to cultivate and develop transparent and accountable leadership. On the economic front, corruption depletes national wealth because, among others, leaders invest the little public resources that the country has in projects that do not benefit the communities but enrich themselves. They do this while ignoring more urgent and needed projects that would be of benefit to the people. In 2018, Kenya was reported to have been losing an estimated Ksh. 608 billion to corruption every year, which is 7.8% of Kenya's GDP. Corruption deters investment in that it hinders fair completion by interfering with the development of fair market structures. On the social front, it destroys the trust of the people as it eats at the social fabric of society. People are unable to have trust in the political systems, institutions, and leadership, leading to general apathy. Corruption affects the environment in that the lack of or non-enforcement of rules and regulations meant to protect the environment as the natural resources are exploited carelessly, and entire ecological systems are destroyed leading to environmental degradation (Cytonn, 2018).

In a statement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> People's Anti-Corruption Summit of the Kenya Human Rights Commission of 2017, the citizens were recorded as stating that grand corruption in Kenya is grand both because of the huge amount of resources involved as well as the socio-economic and political stature of the perpetrators and beneficiaries of the theft, that grand corruption continues to undermine devolution's promise of efficient and affordable public service delivery, with an even greater negative impact on particularly the vulnerable, marginalized and disadvantaged groups and individuals. Even in the face of rising corruption cases, frontline state institutions seem either unable and/or unwilling to act decisively to demonstrate tangible results in the fight against grand corruption. Also, the lack of tangible results in investigation, successful prosecution, and adjudication of grand corruption cases not only points to a breakdown in the

justice chain but could, at worst, indicate ‘complicity by key institutions in undermining national efforts towards a legitimate and non-partisan fight against corruption’ (Commission K. H., 2017, p. 6). Therefore, despite the over-legislation, and over-establishment of enforcement agencies, Kenya is still reeling under the weight of corruption.

### **The Causes of the Problem**

According to Githongo (2020), even though during the period 1963 to 1992 corruption with all its magnanimities was rife, yet some institutions kept their integrity. For instance, then, a degree from a Kenyan university was revered; but this is not the case anymore. A certificate from the Kenya National Examinations Council was trusted; this is no longer the case. The government budget read once a year was considered credible, and news from the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, *The Nairobi Law Monthly*, and *The People* were trustworthy sources; but now doubts have been cast on their integrity (Githongo, 2020).

Is the real cause of corruption known? According to Otenyo (1998), the problem arises from the colonial systems that were laid down in Africa. Whereas the African governments desired to evolve a public service that would observe the highest standards as those evolved in Europe, which would be free from partisan politics, efficient, honest, disciplined, and impartial, those African governments inherited a system of education that denied Africans the opportunities to develop value systems that would put service to the people first. For instance, for any person in colonial Africa to ascend to any position, they had to be connected with the power structures especially the colonial chiefs. These chiefs are the ones who metamorphosed to take up senior positions of leadership in the civil services in post-independence Africa and they carried with them the vice of partisan politics and corruption in all its forms. This is the ground on which the African civil service was built (Otenyo, 1998).

Wrong (2009) sees the entrenchment of tribalism and ethnic politics as an invention of the colonialists. According to her, although pre-colonial Kenya was aware of the different ethnic groups, languages, and customs, and that there would once in a while arise tribal wars, yet these tribes traded and intermarried with each other and exploited the same lands especially for pastures. Upon the onset of colonialism, the colonial government partitioned the country into native reserves occupied by different ethnic groups. Further, they divided the people into what they could do in the lands they had reserved for themselves. For instance, the Kalenjins were to take care of their cattle; the Kamba were given domestic chores and pottery; the Kikuyu were given farming duties; whereas the Maasai and Luos were given duties of mercenaries and domestic servants respectively. When Kenya attained independence, these ethnic distinctions were not eradicated but re-entrenched by the ruling elites. They ensured that their kinsmen got the fruits of independence first; so much so that they gave the white-collar jobs to their own even to the exclusion of those others who would be more qualified. This was the culture adopted by the first President of Kenya and perpetuated by the second such that Kenya adopted a post-independence system of rule that was ‘ethnic-elitist’ with a few ethnic elites being rotated over time which is a mockery of the idea of equal opportunity, with a particular group’s gain translating into the loss to another (Wrong, 1998).

Otenyo (1998) again posits that post-independence public service was headed by officials of cabinet rank who were “politically correct.” This system has led to the collapse of several government projects, potholes on the road, dry water pipes, and over-taxation of the citizenry. Generally, African public enterprises are “inefficient poor performers that guzzle money” and

most public and local government departments can no longer achieve the objectives for which they were set (Otenyo, 1998, pp. 10,11,12).

Discrimination and marginalization of some groups of people are also seen as exposing them to corruption. Citing Jim Fitzgerald from the Equal Rights Trust, Oniango (2020) is of the view that corruption feeds on discrimination and deepens inequality and that marginalized groups often lack the social, political, and economic resources to fight back against corruption. Usually, marginalized groups are discriminated against based on such grounds as sex, ethnicity, religion, age, or disability. Hence discrimination and corruption can reinforce each other. He gives an example of indigenous or ethnic minorities who stand a greater chance of losing their ancestral land and are unable to seek a remedy through the justice system that excludes them. According to Oniango (2020) therefore, only a joint approach can help fight these interrelated problems. These would include campaigns that aim at building build strong, competent, and inclusive institutions and extension of protections through existing legislation to the marginalized groups.

### **Corruption as a War of the Hearts**

Whereas many researchers have tried to unravel the causes of corruption, the writers in this paper see the problem as spiritual and that the real root cause has affected humankind since creation. The Kenyan Constitution makes Kenya a secular state hence removes God from its governance and administrative arena. Article 8 provides that there shall be no state religion, yet the religious books read by most Kenyans brand corruption as a sin against God and humanity. The Bible provides that the reason people fall into and commit sin is because of the fall of mankind recorded in Genesis Chapter 3.

The word “sin” is a common term in the Bible, occurring several hundred times in the Old Testament and fewer times in the New Testament. In Proverbs 28:13 it is expressed as missing the mark or erring. In the New Testament, the Greek word for sin in 1 Corinthians 6:8, *adikia*, connotes the ideas of unrighteousness or injustice. Romans 4:15 refers to sin as a breach of the law while 1 John 3:4 expresses it as lawlessness. Milne (1998) sees the most characteristic of sin as being *directed at God* and any minimizing of it, such as the notion of sin as selfishness, seriously underestimates its gravity. Sin was clearly expressed in Satan’s statement to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden that they would be like God. In other words, Satan was suggesting to mankind that sin would help them take a place equal to that of God, in essence usurping His place (Milne, 1998). Similarly, Satan tempted our Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness, but He overcame the temptation to sin by the Word of God. The first temptation of Jesus was to divert His attention from doing the will of the Father to being preoccupied with His own material needs. Jeremiah 17:9 says that “the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked and it is difficult for one to know it, and only the LORD searches the hearts and tests the minds.”

The Bible shows a close link between sin and corruption. Corruption is the direct consequence of sin. It is interesting to note, however, that none of the popular definitions of corruption make any mention of sin. Could this be the reason the proposed solution to the problem of corruption has focused more on the law, rather than on the condition of the heart? Since the law does not have the power to change hearts, but only reveals people’s faults and sins (Rom 7:7, Gal 3:19), there is a need for something more than the law to address the fundamental problem of corruption which is sin. This requires the transformation of the human heart. The only solution to the human problem of sin is through the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the



cross. This comes through faith and repentance and the commitment to live a new life as a result of a new heart that God gives to the repentant sinner.

To address the human condition and corruption, Jesus began his ministry and teaching by calling on people to repent and turn from their sins "... for the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). He understood the effects of sin on human morality and He called people to renewal and transformation that would lay the foundation for their moral living. Jesus underscored the fact that living an ethical life emerges from a life that is transformed, from a clean and pure heart. This occurs as a result of being cleansed by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ. It results from an intimate relationship with God, the Father of all goodness and truth. The condition of the human heart is very critical for moral life. Having the capacity to reason is not enough for one to do the right or behave in the right way. It takes a transformed heart to do that (Matt. 7:16-20). Jesus said that if the heart is bad, then all that proceeds from it would be bad. The converse is true that if the heart is good, then what comes out of it will be good.

Corruption in the Bible has two dimensions; physical and spiritual. The corruption of the human community in Genesis manifested itself in two ways, in acts of violence and acts of moral decay. This came to a climax in Genesis 6:5 where God commented on human wickedness on the earth and saw how wicked the human race had become. He saw that the inclinations of their hearts, as well as their thoughts, were evil always (Gen 6:5).

Through the prophets of the Old Testament, God spoke earnestly against corruption. In Amos 5:10-17, He speaks against those who hate the just and truthful and those who levy heavy taxes on the poor from the little they have, and yet they have accumulated massive material wealth in the forms of stone mansions and luxuriant farmlands. He advises those who take bribes, oppress the needy and deny them justice in the courts to repent, and change their ways, seek good and not evil, that He may be with and show them mercy. Hosea 9: 9 condemns those who have sunk deep into corruption as they did in the days of Gibeah and warns that God will remember their wickedness and punish them for their sins. Isaiah 1:4 decrees woes on Israel, whose sin is so great that He calls the nation a brood of evildoers and children given to corruption who have forsaken and rejected the Lord.

In the New Testament, corruption is linked to deceitful desires (Eph 4:22), that is choosing a life of the flesh as indicated in Gal 6:8, asserting that those who live desiring only to please their flesh will reap from their fleshly desires, corruption, and death; but those who live to please the Spirit will from the Spirit reap everlasting life. Both sin and corruption enslave a person (2 Peter 2:19) and corruption is the result of our sinful desires as apostle Peter asserts in 2 Peter 1:4.

These passages show that corruption is more than bribery and stealing from the national coffers. It is a human condition that is deeply ingrained in the human heart. So, judging from the biblical teaching on corruption and how it is closely linked to sin, it would be logically unthinkable to address corruption without addressing the fundamental question of sin as part of the solution. It is in considering this that this article deems it critical to address the human condition and the problem of sin as an integral and necessary component in addressing corruption. In other words, the focus on addressing corruption in the country has downplayed the spiritual dimension of the problem. Put simply, corruption is fundamentally a spiritual problem, connected to sinful human nature. To address it effectively, one must address the question of sinful human nature.

Kapolyo (2005) says that even in Jesus' day, corruption was rife and his arrest, trial, and death read like a catalog of miscarriages of justice, for that is what they were. He sees the root of

a bribe as being the motivation of ideas of personal significance, grandeur, and power. To say that human beings are sinners means that the human will, created to be in harmony with God, is now in discord: “your iniquities have separated you from your God” (Isaiah 59:2). It is a statement of fact, not a politically incorrect moral judgment upon the character of the particular individual. It is simply that nothing a fleshly human being can do is perfect by God’s standards. Kapolyo (2005) suggests that it is only a religion that God has revealed, and which is developed based on the Word of God, that would save humankind from their sinful condition. He goes on to say that ‘the influences of sin come as a result of conformity to the ways of this world, adherence to the ways of the ruler of the world (Satan), and the cravings of our sinful nature’ (Kapolyo, 2005, pp. 95, 101-103). The Word of God warns against these three influences.

Groody (2009) advises that although global inequities are rooted in the structural injustices in society, one finds that as one begins to interpret the genesis of those social discords and disorders that lead to poverty in the world, on a deeper level these are integrally related to the disorders found in the hearts of people. He says that it is easier to conquer the challenges of the “outer space” than it is to conquer the challenges of the “inner space” which is the heart. The human heart which has the capacity for good and evil is an infinite mystery. He quotes Mahatma Gandhi who said that “the earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed (Groody, 2009, pp. 10, 11). According to Groody (2009), it is when people set their hearts on earthly rather than spiritual possessions that their frame of reference centers on the love of capital gain rather than on the love of God and neighbor. It is when the accumulation of possessions becomes a concern more consuming than the practice of justice and mercy that the god of money takes possession of them and directs their lives in very deliberate ways because “the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Tim 6:10). According to Groody, greed breaks down “communion and seduces people to the lowest form of human behavior” (ibid., 75, 76).

The EACC Chairperson Rt. Archbishop Eliud Wabukala, said that corruption is “...a war of the heart...and once we succeed it will be great for our country...” and invited everyone to join in the war to liberate the country. He called upon the nation to build strong value systems for society. He said that the war against corruption will not be won by law enforcement alone and that societal or cultural change is critical. In addition to the Archbishop’s statement, societal and cultural change will not occur until one has dealt with the heart because that is where the battle is. There must be a change there that will in effect change the society and deliver us from the culture of corruption. In a bid to fight corruption the Rt. Archbishop introduced a Bible Study Guide entitled: *Integrity: A Weapon against Corruption* which was made available for groups and individuals dealing with various issues of corruption. It seeks to help Kenyans to interact with the Bible and help them live a corrupt-free life as they discover God’s position on corruption and His direction on the issue (Standard Group Digital, 2018).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Corruption in Kenya, like in most African countries, is a major impediment to the economic and social development of Kenya and the flourishing of the Kenyan citizens. It derails the legal, political, social, and economic well-being of the society. Corruption appears to have been glorified and the corrupt are seen as heroes and heroines who are seen moving with the latest models of vehicles and owning expensive properties in prime areas. Most people in Kenya seem to be candidates of corruption only that chance and opportunity have not been available to them. It is today not possible to single out anybody who has not been affected by corruption in one way or the other - either as a culprit or a victim. Apart from plundering of public funds and

misuse of public offices for personal gain, some citizens break laws with impunity regardless of the consequences. Since 2002, Kenya has enacted numerous legislations in a bid to rid herself of the vice of corruption. Several institutions have been established and empowered to handle corruption through investigations, arrests, and prosecutions. However, instead of the vice being eradicated, it has been on the rise. The culture of corruption continues to entrench itself. The only way to deal with it is to unashamedly return the nation and hence the hearts of people to God. Only God will save people by changing the hearts that are corrupted by sin. A righteous person will not commit an act of corruption. The love and fear of God will prevail against any temptation to corruption.

The battle against corruption must therefore be won in the hearts of the citizens. Kenya must accept to return to God in repentance and seek for change that comes from the Spirit of God. The reading and teaching of the Word of God should be taken seriously by all. It is therefore recommended that the Church should take the lead in the battle against corruption by teaching people to live in righteousness and hate sin, and in prayers of repentance. Prayer is vital in the battle against corruption because prayer and justice are two sides of the same spiritual coin. Justice without prayer and a change of heart quickly degenerate into frenetic social activism that lasts for a moment and things go back to normal, and prayer without justice is empty and hollow. While justice gives the motivation to change the world, prayer challenges Christians to change themselves. According to Isaiah 58:6-7, God's preferred fast is when we release the bonds of injustice and liberate those who are oppressed.

According to Groody (2009), prayer is not a mere psychological tool for self-actualization, but a spiritual grace that facilitates human transformation. It is fundamental to people who are involved in the work of justice. Therefore, if we are unwilling to change, we will abandon prayer as a regular practice in our lives. He says,

“Prayer opens us up to the Spirit who alone can transform everything that does not conform to the mind and heart of Christ (Rom 12:2). The desire to change the world begins with a commitment to change ourselves. It grounds and connects us to God and also informs, reforms, and transforms us and all other relationships. Prayer allows God to guide, shape, and influence our decisions, and to accomplish in us some of the highest works of the human heart” (2009, pp. 250-251).

Returning people to God through prayer and the Word of God, and re-igniting the love of God and neighbor will help the people to desire and pursue simplicity. Simplicity, according to Groody (Ibid.), is a lifestyle of responsible stewardship for God's creation; it is focused more on being than having, and while related to material possessions, it has more to do with the clarity of heart and intention than with simply not having “things.” It flows from a deep desire for dedication to God and to have the Kingdom of God governing our lives and everything else is reprioritized and revalued. One is then less prone to grasp, and more open to releasing what they have. Simplicity gives expression to the truth that it is only in God that we find our self-worth and value, and that “love received through humble openness is the greatest possession of human life. It has more to do with the quality of the heart than the number of possessions one has”(Groody, 2009, 258-260). Training our people to live in simplicity will go a long way to dispel corruption from our society as they will find value in the love of God and neighbor more than in the love of earthly possessions.

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