

TAQA MAGAZINE

taqamagazine.online

INSPIRE • ENGAGE

ENCOURAGE

ISSUE #8 2024

Action Becomes Distraction

Scripture has a way of revealing deeper insights each time you reread it. Some insights are rather surprising.

Monsters

They are not blood-sucking vampires, bandage-wrapped revenants, or bipedal wolfmen from the movies.

In Pursuit of Serenity

Like a cool rain after a dry heat, a new season can vanquish the enemy within.

Located By
GRACE

Dr. Rebecca Manford

offers us a glimpse into her fervor for Christ, the Finance world & the sound of music.



Editor: Lynnette Ndhlovu
lynnett@taqamagazine.online

Please mail correspondence to:
Lynnett@taqamagazine.online

Design and Layout: Native Aliens Media
info@nativealiens.co.za

Website Design: Native Aliens Media
info@nativealiens.co.za

Purpose:

At TAQA magazine, we are a family of God loving Christians who are excited about sharing testimonies of how God is still speaking today. The conventional pulpit has since evolved over the years and we are the product of that evolution. The WORD is and will always be solid and the same.

We will tackle issues from parenting to schooling to relationships to the covenant of marriage and issues that affect the life of the contemporary Christian. Our aim is to welcome you to our family and to have conversations with you on the goodness of God and encourage you in your everyday life. We hope as we embark on this journey we will move from Glory to Glory in the Lord.

Welcome to the praise world of TAQA

Copyright:

WWW.TAQAMAGAZINE.ONLINE



TAQA MAGAZINE

INSPIRE • ENGAGE • ENCOURAGE

- Home
- About
- Faith
- Family
- Entertainment
- Profiles
- Food & Cuisine
- Money
- Blog
- Issues
- Contact

TAQA Magazine covers displayed on the tablet screen:

- For Health**: A woman in a white top, with the text "Get your health at your own risk."
- CELEB**: A man in a black shirt, with the text "Celebrity News & More."
- Hairwadi**: A woman in a purple top, with the text "ON MINISTRY, BUSINESS, FAMILY & THE LOVE OF HER LIFE."
- The M Word**: A couple, with the text "The M Word: A guide to marriage."
- Beginnings**: A couple, with the text "Beginnings: A guide to marriage."
- The Holy Bible**: A couple, with the text "The Holy Bible: A guide to marriage."
- Positive Endeavor**: A couple, with the text "Positive Endeavor: A guide to marriage."
- Sacrifice**: A couple, with the text "Sacrifice: A guide to marriage."

EDITOR'S *Nate*

2024 is here in all its glory. People have written their resolutions and are energised for the coming year. Goals have been set and people are on some **'Here I come world'** kind of energies. It's a great way to start the year. However, not everyone is in the same boat as the energy bunnies. It takes a lot of willpower to face each year with renewed energy but not see any of the goals come to fruition. You question your faith, then realise that resolutions and energy don't make your dreams come to life, **God's** Grace does. Spending more time with the **Lord** and letting **HIM** guide you as to which goals to pursue, saves one the heartache of rewriting the same resolutions repeatedly. This reality is hard to swallow for a lot of people. When you realise that **'The LORD directs your steps'**, you will seek **HIM** first. Change your strategy this year and do something different. You never know, you could end up cancelling the resolutions or goals that have been on your list for decades.

Let **LOVE** lead!

Lynn
LYNNETT MLAMBO



TAOQA
MAGAZINE

INSPIRE • ENGAGE • ENCOURAGE

CONTENTS

ISSUE No. 8



EDITOR'S NOTE

04 **He Will Guide Your Steps**
Lynnett Mlambo

FAITH

08 **Action That Becomes Distraction**
Miss Dee

14 **In Pursuit of Serenity**
Lynnett Mlambo

COVER FEATURE

18 **Located by Grace**
Dr Rebecca Manford

LIFESTYLE

28 **The Gallant Soldier**
Alvin Mlambo

TAQA KIDS

34 **Welcome to Taqa Kids**

36 **Faithful Fun**
The Key Master

38 **Teaching Our Children How to Pray**
Moses Derrickson

RECIPES

44 **Homemade Breakfast Burger**
Kitchen Kraft

46 **Homemade Chicken Nuggets**
Kitchen Kraft

LIFESTYLE

49 **Monsters**
Alvin Mlambo

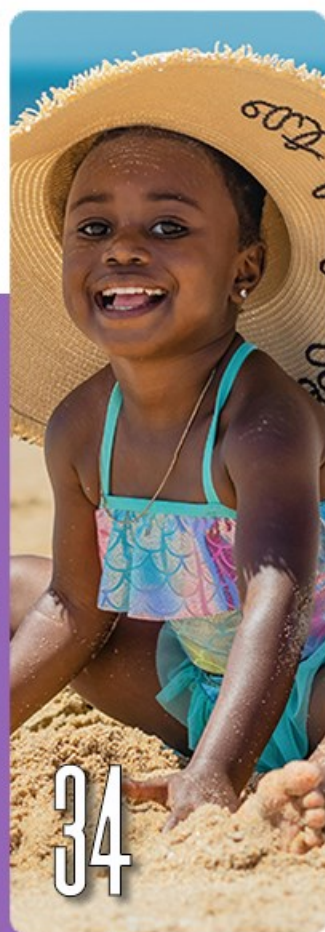
ENTERTAINMENT

52 **My Hollywood MBA**
Critiocal Chris

54 **The Writers' Block**

MONEY

56 **Revolutionising Savings**
The Penny Pincher



Action That Becomes Distraction



*Sometimes doing God's work can take away
from our focus on connecting with God.*

There's nothing like getting more insight from scripture you've read before. I have read the story of Mary and Martha numerous times but this time around, I saw it in a different light.

The story of Mary and Martha comes from Chapter 10 of the **Gospel of Luke**. Mary and Martha, who are sisters, open their home to Jesus as he travels with his disciples. As Martha hurries to ensure the preparations, Mary simply sits at the feet of Jesus and listens to the wisdom of **Christ**. Mary and Martha are two sisters with incredibly different focuses. While Mary soaks in the moment with **Jesus**, Martha can't think past the cooking and cleaning. Martha quickly becomes frustrated with all the work she is doing alone and complains to Jesus! Martha then says to **Jesus**, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself?"

By Miss Dee

"Tell her to help me!" Jesus replies, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." You see when I studied this scripture before, I used to think, Martha was in the wrong. That the running around she was doing was not what Jesus wanted from her.

Let me highlight, the part where **Jesus** says "Mary has chosen better" Not Mary has chosen the right way, but she has chosen better. This meant Martha had also chosen a good way of doing things, just not a better way. If you think about it, if **Jesus** was sitting in your living room today, would you not abandon everything and go and sit in **HIS** presence? Mary prized the time with **Jesus**

and gave her entire focus to his presence. When Martha complains to Jesus, he gently reminds her of what her focus should be on - building a relationship with **HIM**. Yes, Martha showed wonderful hospitality welcoming **Jesus** and his disciples in, but she got lost in the distractions.

What is stealing our attention today? And I am not talking about things that are un-Godly. I referring to things that are the normal day-to-day things that you are doing, acts of service that fill your day but are also stealing that one-on-one with **Jesus**. Mary and Martha appear multiple times in the Gospels. Their brother Lazarus gets risen from the dead, and according to the **Gospel of John**, it was Mary who anointed **Jesus** with expensive perfume.

However, the most famous story of Mary and Martha comes in **Luke 10**, when Jesus and his disciples are traveling to Jerusalem and come to the sisters' home. While a meal is being prepared, Jesus starts teaching and Mary sits at his feet, listening (**Luke 10:39**). Martha is also listening but distracted by the meal preparation and gets irritated that Mary isn't pitching in. Martha goes to Jesus and says, "*Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me*" (**Luke 10:40**).

Jesus' response was unexpected. Rather than tell Mary to help, **Jesus** says, "*Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her*" (**Luke 10:41-42**).

Now we can say, Martha was acting up, why did she take it upon herself to run around and do the preparations then turn around and complain about it? But we need to understand that in those times it was almost tradition for the womenfolk to prepare food when you had visitors. Prepare something to eat, wash their hands and feet, prepare where they might rest for the night, and so on. The issue here was that Martha had allowed the activity of hospitality to become a distraction. She couldn't see the forest for the trees. She lost her focus and got mad that her sister would not join her in her activities, in the busyness.

One of the greatest sins of the modern world, I believe, is busyness. We live in the most distracted, frenetic society of all time. Especially now after what we are calling post-lockdown, we seem to be trying to fit in the last couple of years of sedentary into our everyday lives. It's FOMO to the extreme.

In all of this, let's try and continue making time for our quiet moments, moments of reflection, our one-on-ones with **God**. Let's not be like Martha and get

*“Martha
quickly
becomes
frustrated with
all the work she
is doing alone
and complains
to Jesus!”*

frustrated with the checklist of actions we need to do and then complain to God about being burnt out or weary. Delegate some of the work you are doing or leave it for another day. I know that sounds like laziness or slothfulness. I am saying taking the time out, to do just that, take a time out.

Take that time out, sit at the feet of *Jesus*, or whatever that looks like for you,



and listen to His impartations.

Off the back of the Martha and Mary article, I would like to give a testimony, at least the short version of what *Jesus'* love and grace has done for me in my life.

I gave my life to *Christ* when I was 12 or 13, thereabout. So, I grew up thinking that to be a 'good Christian' you need to be good and do good all the time. Leaving no room for errors. But as you may know, *to err is to be human*. No human is perfect and to think we are, or you are will constantly disappoint you. I have lived my life like Martha, always running around and trying to help the people *God* brings into my life.

I would pour out myself trying to help others and when I couldn't, I thought to

myself, there was no way I could ever be "good enough" for *God* to be proud of me. I would struggle throughout my entire life in this pattern of trying hard to be a better person, because that's the cornerstone of being a great Christian right? Then came the resentment. The resentment of Martha towards her sister Mary. I would ask God why I always felt so weary, so depleted. Why was I the one running around doing the preparations, while others sat at the feet of Jesus?

Why was I falling behind in my life goals, while others continually achieved them? And my answer came at the beginning of 2019 and took hold during the pandemic. I was having lunch with a friend whose husband is a senior Pastor at a church. And I was telling her about a cousin of mine who needed a place to stay for a few months, and that I had just wanted to be by myself for a little while since I had had someone visiting for a few weeks who just left. And she asked me, why I couldn't just say no. I looked at her in disbelief, saying that *God* would punish me because I was turning away a child of His. To which she replied, if the God we pray to and serve will punish you for wanting to have time to yourself and wanting to replenish your cup, then we are in the

*Because if God
required me to be
this perfect
Christian, I was
surely going to fail
that test.*

wrong faith. I kind of laughed it off.

Then came another request from someone else, needing something else, then another request, then another.....and before I knew it, I would start getting migraines and anxiety attacks. This could not be what God wanted from me and for me.

I consulted a counselor at my church, and we delved into what my core issue was. You see I thought I could 'good act' my way into heaven. Because if **God** required me to be this perfect Christian, I was surely going to fail that test. If I carried out as many good acts as I could, perhaps it would offset the other not-so-great acts that I do. You know what I'm talking about pride, unforgiveness, etc...

But then I came to realize that I would never be "good enough" in my eyes or in the eyes of others, but in God's eyes, I am His

perfect child. Through Jesus, I am made perfect. That **Jesus** died and instead, of **Him** getting the credit, the credit was passed onto me.

So when **God** looks at me, He sees **Jesus's** credit. He sees me as perfect. **Jesus** asks us for our heart, for us to accept his gift of grace and salvation just as we are. Right, where we are, and without prejudice, he loves us unconditionally if we accept his gift.

This road is not an easy one, I will stumble and fall and get it wrong. But that does not mean I am unworthy of **Gods** love or **His** Grace. I'm here to tell you that I don't deserve this gift, but I accept it every day, strive to be the best I can be, and continually work to be more like **Christ**. To be more loving, more caring, and more forgiving. The more I strive for this life goal, the more blessings the **Lord** sends my way.

TAAQ
MAGAZINE

**DID YOU
KNOW?**



An 11 day journey took the Israelites 14 600 days just because they were stubborn, disobedient and ungrateful.

LESSON:

Do not underestimate the power of gratitude. The lack of it will make you age in the wilderness needlessly.



Fear not,
God will direct your
steps in

2024

Happy New Year

TAQA
CHRISTIAN MEDIA

TAQA
MAGAZINE

INSPIRE • ENGAGE • ENCOURAGE

TAQA TV

TAQA
Kids

CHRISTLIKE
The Podcast



In Pursuit of Serenity

*Peace and equanimity are more precious
than gold when seeking **HIS** face.*

By Lynnett Mlambo

For everything there is a time and season (*Ecclesiastes 3:1*). This is a very hard pill to swallow especially if the season is of growth and endurance. “*The suffering you are going through has an end, nothing lasts forever*”. I am sure you have heard this a lot of times before but allow me to testify to what we experienced.

The season I will share with you is when we were praying for our beautiful blessings. It was a long and painful wait. I will not paint a picture of happiness and joy because that is not what it was about. We had to fight the worst kind of battle we could fight the battle with ourselves.

Most people believe that resistance or opposition to one’s progress comes from outside. Not at all. Most times it lives right within us. The battle that is in your mind is fiercer than any physical battle you can ever fight with an external enemy. This is what motivational speakers are always talking about, believing in the self to overcome challenges. We needed to grow spiritually and mentally to finally get our blessing, a child.

15 years ago, the lord
blessed
us

with our first child. In God's grand design, he saw it fit to take him back two months later. I was rocking him to sleep when he closed his eyes forever. For years after that, we tried for another child with no success. I remember a time when I created a culture in which I would go shopping for baby clothes when I had the worst dysmenorrhea. Amid that pain, I would go and claim the children I wanted. I was exercising my faith even though it was a painful experience. Anyone who has ever experienced dysmenorrhea will tell you they would rather curl up in a ball somewhere and shut out the world than GO

SHOPPING! Yet there was

a power I was harnessing, and I was sharpening my mind to still believe that I could bear a child even when my body was excreting the one

*“All my peers
seemed to have
it easier than
me and were
casually
having
children as and
when they
wanted.”*

thing I needed to have it. It was hard.

At the time I used to keep a diary where I tracked ovulation dates and a whole host of activities I needed to do to conceive. From which foods to eat, and maintaining the optimum weight to even what to watch or read. Funny enough though being intimate with my husband was not one of them and yet it was the most crucial. These activities drained me emotionally and mentally. Beyond that, I faced physical attacks with heavy dysmenorrhea and all the medication I stuffed myself with to be “healthier.”

All my peers seemed to have it easier than me and were casually having children as and when they wanted. Some even had abortions because having a child was not part of their program. I would fight tooth and nail to stop my heart from being bitter and unfocussed and to stop from asking **GOD** “Why would you give her a baby she didn't want and not give me”.

Looking back, I think I died a thousand deaths trying to deal with that. It was hard to forgive people who you couldn't openly tell you were mad at for their womb choices. Accepting the lesson of

“I would tell myself I was wonderfully and fearfully made whenever I had thoughts of being undeserving or unworthy.”

forgiveness and understanding that you don't control the blessings people get or how they use them was hard. It taught me to focus on peace. I began to pray for peace in my mind and heart. That is how, through **Christ**, I overcame the spiritual battle.

My inner battle was to constantly hype myself up to get pregnant. I had a voice constantly telling me, “*It wouldn't happen.*”, “*You are the worst mother in the world, you rock babies to death.*” “*God will never give you another one*”, “*You can't do it. You are broke, what will you feed them with?*”

These were the thoughts that used to haunt me. I have just given you the nice version of my thoughts. Have you ever tried to run away from yourself? I would have thoughts of getting a new head as I struggled to deal with harnessing good thoughts. I would find myself saying to God “*Please take this head off me!*” However, he did not grant my request. He gave me something much better, peace.

This season lasted for years, it was a daily battle and every time I would lean heavily on the WORD of **GOD** to get through the day. The battles were fierce, some I lost and some I won. Through all of it, I held on to the knowledge that the **Word** was my only way out and that one day it would win the war. I would tell myself *I was wonderfully and fearfully made* whenever I had thoughts of being undeserving or unworthy. The biggest battle we face is the one with ourselves. You can't run or hide from yourself or your

thoughts.

Unfortunately, as believers, we want to present a perfect version of

ourselves to **Christ** when

he came for the broken and imperfect version of us. By **God's** grace, that peace I desperately needed came to pass. How? I began believing the words I read in the Bible. I surrounded myself with positive people who reassured me it would come to pass. I stopped focusing on getting pregnant and focused on improving myself and helping others. I even gave away most of my dysmenorrhea-shopping stash and it didn't hurt. I began to relax and seek **God** instead. Then the voices stopped. They still make appearances here and there but now they are dealing with a transformed me.

Peace of mind is a treasure. What sweet joy! My season had changed for the better! I felt like I was renewed in every aspect. When **God** blesses you, **HE** makes all things new. At the beginning of the year 2015, **God** blessed us with a son who was to be the first of four. The joy we felt was overwhelming and we couldn't contain it. He was finally here. It ended the season that purified us in thought and deed and prepared us to be parents to him.

In this season we make notes on homework, study times, what to watch on TV, diaper changes, and bedtime stories. Our season has changed dramatically. All by the GRACE of the living **GOD**

Everything has a season.

TAQA MAGAZINE

INSPIRE • ENGAGE • ENCOURAGE



SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Wholesome and uplifting testimonies & stories
sent straight into your inbox.

Visit:

WWW.TAQAMAGAZINE.ONLINE

Located By Grace

In a world where the lines between professional success and personal purpose often blur, it's inspiring to encounter individuals who seamlessly navigate both realms with grace and conviction like **Dr Rebecca Manford**

Born in 1988, Dr. Manford's early years were marked by both challenge and resilience. Losing her father at the tender age of 17 could have derailed her path, but instead, it fueled her determination to carve out a successful career. Today, she stands as a beacon of hope and possibility, having risen to the esteemed position of Chief Finance Officer at a prominent tobacco conglomerate.

But Dr. Manford's journey extends far beyond the boardroom. Her leadership trajectory began in her formative years, where she honed her skills as Headgirl, House Captain, and even Junior Deputy Mayor of Harare. This early exposure to leadership laid the foundation for her remarkable ascent through the ranks of the corporate world.

Yet, Dr. Manford's story is not confined to the corridors of power. She is also celebrated for her multifaceted talents,



including her prowess as a Gospel musician and Pan-African Speaker. Her musical journey, which began in the hallowed halls of her high school's Chapel Choir, has evolved into a platform for spiritual expression and social commentary. The Herald Zimbabwe Newspaper has aptly dubbed her the 'Gospel Diva' for her soul-stirring music and unwavering commitment to addressing societal issues.

In addition to her musical endeavors, Dr. Manford is a sought-after speaker on Pan-African platforms, where she lends her voice to critical discussions on financial empowerment, gender equality, and the empowerment of the girl child. Her passion for mentorship led her to establish "Manford's Underclass," a visionary program dedicated to guiding individuals towards their fullest potential, both personally and professionally.

Furthermore, Dr. Manford's philanthropic efforts underscore her commitment to serving others. From her early involvement in charitable organizations like Interact during her high school years to her ongoing initiatives to support marginalized communities, she remains steadfast in her dedication to making a positive impact in the world.

In this exclusive interview, we delve into the heart and mind of Dr. Rebecca Manford, exploring the intersection of faith, leadership, and service that defines her remarkable journey.

Can you take us through a day in the life of Rebecca Manford?

I start working the moment I wake up. My mind is already in 'strategy' mode the moment I open my eyes and it is at this time I find solutions to many problems. In the morning I start with a workout. Then I proceed to the office. In the mornings I usually have meetings. My phone never stops ringing!! I barely get any free time during the day because my role entails a great amount of pressure and tight deadlines. After work, I normally relax and watch television with my family as we have our supper.

Give us a brief career history which led you to your current position and tell us what attracted you to the world of finance.

I had a start to my career at 19 years of age. I have worked right from the bottom, if you can call it that, to where I am now. I have been a clerk, senior on the job, supervisor, manager and now a director. I became a director at age 33, so if you do the math you will see it entailed a lot of hard work and perseverance. My father was in this profession and I admired him from a young age so being in finance came quite naturally to my dreams and aspirations.

What are some of the highlights of your career so far?

There have been various highlights throughout my career when I look back, but I must say that the last couple of years has been very interesting as I have crossed the national barrier to become a Pan-African Leader and sought-after speaker. I have also been honoured by various prestigious

CEO
ZIMBABWE

MENTORSHIP
CLUB

ZIMBABWE CEO'S NETWORK
mentorship
CLUB



ZIMBABWE
CEO'S NETWORK



ZIMBABWE
CEO'S NETWORK



TOP CEO



CEO

CEO
MAGAZINE
ZIMBABWE

ZIMBABWE
CEO'S NETWORK

ZIMBABWE CEO'S NETWORK
mentorship



ZIMBABWE
CEO'S NETWORK

CEO'S NETWORK
mentorship
CLUB

institutions with awards in recognition of my work. This has been truly humbling and I am so grateful. It has encouraged me to continue this path and push harder to make my mark on this planet.

The world of business and specifically finance has been traditionally viewed as male dominated. How have you managed to transcend those stereotypes?

It is indeed a male-dominated space. Especially in my industry and at my level. I will most times find myself as the only woman in a boardroom or even at industry events. I have worked hard from day one and even though I have suffered gender

discrimination at every step, and mind you I still do, I have always made sure that I let my

work speak for myself, and not my gender. At the end of the day, there is room for anyone who puts in the work and gets to where they want to be through merit.

How did some of the challenges you faced in your career sharpen and mould you to be the professional you are today?

A great number of challenges such as gender discrimination toughened me up as a person. I believe whatever doesn't destroy you makes you stronger and I am grateful to have gone through such moments as they made me aware of the type of game, I'm playing in. Other challenges came in the form of economic hardships and the need to stay afloat. The hardships in the economy affected my rate of advancing my studies and also pushed me, as with many people in the workforce, to always seek greener pastures to have a better quality of life. A lot of my peers left the country, I stayed.

Not only are you a business professional but you are a model, singer, and preacher. How do you manage to maintain a balance



throughout the different hats you have to wear?

I don't know if there is ever such a thing as achieving balance but I am quite sure I am always pursuing it!!! Yes, I certainly wear many hats, and I am grateful for my upbringing which I think has moulded me into a natural hard worker. My mother was very strict as we were growing up. But above all, in everything I do, I feel I will be practising my faith. God has a plan for me, and he gave me plenty of gifts I doubt he gave them to me so I would keep them to myself and fold my hands. I believe it is in his will and my purpose to use all gifts and talents to change lives inspire others and glorify him.

How has your faith influenced your multiple roles?

“My help cometh even from the Lord” Psalm 121:2. I am truly aware that in my own strength, I could never do all this. I pray every day for strength to carry out my multiple roles and I find God always sends people my way to assist in fulfilling the assignments.

I enjoy listening to your music quite a lot and one song that stands out for me is “Ndamirira”. What was your inspiration for producing the song?

So, most of my songs tend to be personal, and this one is very personal. I did that piece at a time when I felt so discouraged and it was my cry to God to hear me out. I was



‘heavily laden’ and so I brought my burdens to the Lord. And such a faithful God he is eventually to always come through for us.

What are the top 5 songs currently on your playlist and which musician do you admire or who inspires you?

Well, Volts JT Is on my playlist at the moment!! I listen to a lot of gospel music and worship songs to be particular. I'm currently vibing to an all-time classic album “Change the World” by the legendary Bonnie Deuschle and the Celebration Choir.

Currently you have the awesome “Manford's Underclass” platform where you provide mentorship to the willing. Do you currently have

a mentor? If so why did you select that particular individual?

I have a mentor, yes, and I didn't choose them. I believe God made our paths meet for a purpose. They have been so pivotal in my growth and remaining grounded. They are wise, and patient and always want to see me win. Those are some of the best qualities of a good mentor. One should pray that God aligns them with mentors who are destiny-pushers.

What do you do to unwind and relax? How often do you take a break?

On this one, I should be in the naughty corner!! I have been booked and busy every other day, especially in the last few years. I want to work on it and make sure that I do take time out to relax and rest. Pastor Dudu Manhenga says it's wise to choose a day that no matter what comes, you set it aside for



REBECCA
MANFORD

CHARTERED
ACCOUNTANT AND CFO

MANFORD'S
UNDERCLASS

 @manfordsunderclass

yourself and the family. I will take her advice.

If you had to describe yourself in only five words, what would those be?

Loyal. Tough. Sincere. Hard-working. Passionate

If you could, what would you tell your 18-year-old self?

It would go a little something like this: Dear Rebecca. You are a child of God, and in whatever you do or encounter, never forget that. You will go through many experiences and some unfortunate things in the coming years, but remember God's got you and you will come out top!

What pearls of wisdom do you have for young ladies and men for that matter who are venturing into the world?

In a world in which society wants us all to be the same, strive to be yourself even if it's different.

In

whatever you do keep your principles and morals that were taught to you by our elders and faith. There are many appealing things out there but not everything is good for you, and neither must you indulge in everything.

As far as career-wise all I have to say is there is no such thing as overnight success. There

is always a great story of hard work and resilience

attached to any success. Put in the work. Pay your dues!







In a world in which society wants us all to be the same, strive to be yourself even if it's different.

The Gallant Soldier

*How do we tell the difference between false blessings from the devil and true blessings from **God** when they all look identical?*

By Alvin Mlambo

WMy wife and I are both products of the Suburbs. Though we grew up in different cities on opposite sides of the country there are stark similarities in the respective stories of our upbringings. None of the similarities, however, involved agriculture. Grudgingly watering my father's immaculately tenured flower garden after being instructed to do so while Voltron or He-man were bashing bad guys on TV was the closest I ever got to any kind of agrarian experience. I had zero interest in working with dirt and that feeling did not change well

*From the
minute I had
the first
mouthful, I
was
converted.
Hallelujah,
she made me
a believer.*

into my adulthood. I had always wanted to become a doctor, heart surgeon to be exact and honestly getting dirt under my fingernails was incongruent with this plan. I was a city boy through and through and was proud of it. My wife's life path was not much different. She always felt she was a vanguard of humanity and all she ever wanted was to be a human rights lawyer. There were no green fingers on her end either. As the old Yiddish proverb goes, "We plan, **God** laughs."

My wife is a nonsense person who rarely suffers foolishness or

mediocrity. She has very high standards for herself, and these extend to just about every facet of her life. Some time ago, she trusted me

enough to go shopping without her. This turned out to be a big mistake on her part as my purchases were way below her standards. The vegetable stand I had bought the kale from had pulled a fast one and cleverly hid the yellow and dying leaves in the center of some thick and healthy ones. And she was so looking forward to that kale. After I issued a plethora of apologies, she vowed never to purchase her precious kale from anonymous suppliers. Though I was relieved that the blame did not lay squarely on my shoulders, I still wondered what exactly her words meant. The weeks that followed would soon put an end to the wonder.

It started with one bucket of soil. Then it became 2 buckets. The next thing I knew, she had repurposed one of my book containers. What was once the home of my encyclopedias, Stephen King and Ray Bradbury novel collections was now home to little African kale seedlings. Given the fact that we stayed on the second floor of an apartment building, I decided to lay down the law. Being an ever-pragmatic person, I tried to talk my wife down. While stating the obvious that our modest apartment had no room for potted plants, let alone an entire garden, how on earth did she think that this would ever be a meaningful endeavour? Besides, she knew absolutely nothing about gardening! Throughout what I believed to be a practical delivery she kept giving me that

We envisioned ourselves on our 90,000-hectare farm with Sunflower, Soya beans, Ginger, Maize, Garlic, Poultry, dairy, and even a fishery.

please-just-get-to-the-end look. When I was done, she simply waved me off like she was waving an annoying fly and walked away. I had been with my wife long enough to know that once she had her mind set on something, she would pursue it with dogged determination, reality, and contrary evidence be damned. This time, however, I was certain this was one for the “loss” column. So, I waited. I waited for her to come crawling back to me tears on her face, kissing my feet, telling me I was right all along. That day never came.

She turned our little balcony into a green wonderland that she worked hard and lovingly on. She went out shopping for seeds and researched soil fertility, optimum watering levels, and organic farming techniques. Then after 9 weeks of blood, sweat, and love, it was time to taste the fruit of her labours. From the minute I had the first mouthful, I was converted. Hallelujah, she made me a believer. From then I was a devoted member of her garden brigade. I would diligently help with the watering, weeding, and tending to our second family. After seeing and tasting the success of her kale project, she decided to broaden her horizons. The next project she decided to tackle was a tomato plantation.

Given the triumph of the kale garden, which was driven by sheer concentrated power of will, we (yes, we) believed that the tomato garden would be just as successful.

So, we kicked off the project by acquiring more containers and different varieties of tomato seeds. We would water the garden every day, remove the weeds, fertilize, talk to the bare soil, and pray over it. Then we started seeing signs of life. It started with one little green shoot appearing from the soil. Then there were two, then three. Next thing you know, our containers were full of little green shoots. We celebrated as we looked at them and marvelled at how fast they were growing. We believed that this was the start of great things. We envisioned ourselves on our 90,000-hectare farm with Sunflower, Soya beans, Ginger, Maize, Garlic, Poultry, dairy, and even a fishery. When we dream, we dream big and in colour.

After much love, care, and attention, our little babies started flowering. That is when the celebrations really started. But in the deepest recesses of my mind, I had an itch I could not satisfy. Like an irritation in the small of your back that you cannot quite reach. I shoved it down and concentrated on the project at hand. We convinced ourselves that if we did it successfully with the kale then success is inevitable with the tomato. And soon we would see the literal fruits of our labour. We took pictures and kept a visual diary of our plants progress. We loved them like they were our children. But amid all the revelry the itch would not let me go. The flowers didn't really look...well...tomato-ish. In the throes of agrarian ecstasy neither one of us had bothered to do any real research.

Thanks to the convenience of modern technology, I decided to do a Google image search. Though there were some similarities, our plants looked quite

different from tomato plants on the internet. So, I took a pic of our plants and visited Google once more. Much to our disappointment we were informed that instead of tomatoes, what we had was a flourishing bed of a weed called the "Gallant Soldier." In our blissful ignorance, we had been deceived. We dug up the whole bed and wondered what had happened to our tomato seeds. We had poured so much into false promises.

This episode got me thinking. As Christians we must discern between genuine blessings from **God** and false blessings offered by the deceitful schemes of Satan. While **God's** blessings lead us closer to **Him** and fulfill **His** purpose for our lives, false blessings from Satan often divert our attention and waste our time on fleeting pursuits. Scripture warns us of Satan's tactics, describing him as a cunning



adversary who disguises himself as an angel of light (**2 Corinthians 11:14**). One of his primary strategies is to present counterfeit blessings that mimic the true blessings of **God**. These false blessings may appear appealing and promising on the surface, but their ultimate purpose is to lead us away from **God's** will and distract us from **His** plan for our lives. False blessings can take the form of distractions that consume our time and energy without contributing to our spiritual growth or serving **God's** kingdom.

So how do we discern between genuine blessings from **God** and false blessings from Satan? The key lies in seeking **God's** wisdom and aligning our desires with **His** will. We got a bit sidetracked by prioritizing our desire to take methods of production into our own hands. There was nothing wrong with this in and of itself, but we simply prayed to God to bless our efforts without asking if indeed our desires were aligned to his purpose for us. Additionally, we must cultivate a mindset

focused on eternal values rather than temporary pleasures. By prioritizing **God's** kingdom and **His** righteousness above all else (**Matthew 6:33**), we can resist the allure of false blessings and experience the abundant life that **God** promises to those who follow **Him** faithfully.

So, in conclusion, dear reader, let us be vigilant in discerning between genuine blessings from **God** and false blessings from Satan. After deep reflection, my wife and I prayed and meditated on some soul-searching questions. If indeed God was to bless us with the farm how then do we avoid cultivating 90 000 hectares of *gallant soldiers*? we prioritized **God's** will above our desires and remained steadfast in pursuing **His** kingdom. Today her second-floor balcony garden boasts kale, tomatoes, onions, green peppers, okra, some struggling pumpkin plants, and 5 avocado trees in buckets. Knowing that **His** blessings far surpass any counterfeit blessings that the enemy may offer, we will overcome.



Tell The World *Your Story*

**Become a
Contributer for Taqa
Magazine and share your
ideas,
observations,
experiences and advice
on living a God Loving
Life.**

TAQA
MAGAZINE

Contact Lynnett On:

LYNNETT@TAQAMAGAZINE.ONLINE

+27 10 447 8956

+27 78 036 9682



Welcome to



Imagine a place where you can dive into amazing stories, play awesome games, and learn all about the incredible adventures in the Bible. Well, that's exactly what Taqa Kids is all about – making the fantastic stories from the Bible come to life in a way that's easy for you to understand and enjoy.

LET'S EXPLORE TOGETHER!



Taqa Kids is like a treasure chest full of exciting things just for you! Each page is packed with colorful pictures, fun activities, and stories that will make you go, "Wow!" Whether you're just starting to learn about God or you're already a Bible expert, Taqa Kids is here to make your faith journey super fun and interesting.

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES GALORE!



But wait, there's more! Taqa Kids isn't just about reading – it's about playing, too! Get ready for super fun games, coloring pages, and activities that will keep you entertained and help you remember the awesome stuff you learn.

PARENTS AND FRIENDS, YOU'RE INVITED TOO!



Guess what? Taqa Kids is not just for you – it's for your friends and family too! You can share the fun stories and activities with them, and together, you'll discover how cool it is to learn and grow in your faith as a big, happy family.



JOIN THE TAQA KIDS ADVENTURE!

So, are you ready for the coolest, most exciting adventure ever? Taqa Kids is here to make your days brighter, your smiles bigger, and your hearts filled with love and faith. Grab your snacks, get comfy, and let's dive into the wonderful world of Taqa Kids together!

*Buckle up, little explorers - the Taqa Kids adventure
is about to begin!*





faithful fun

Welcome to Taqa Kids first quiz game where you can test your knowledge of the Bible and learn more about your faith! Are you ready to embark on an exciting journey through scripture? Let's get started!

Round 1: Bible Trivia

1) Who was the first man created by God?

- Adam
- Noah
- Moses
- Abraham

2) Which of the following is not one of the Ten Commandments?

- You shall not kill.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not listen to worldly music.
- You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

2) Who was the prophet that God used to part the Red Sea?

- Moses
- Elijah
- Isaiah
- Samuel

4) What is the last book of the New Testament?

- Acts
- Revelation
- Romans
- Hebrews

5) Who betrayed Jesus to the Roman authorities?

- Peter
- Judas Iscariot
- Thomas
- John

Round 2: Bible Stories

6) What was the name of the man who built an ark to save his family and animals from the great flood?

- Moses
- Abraham
- Noah
- David

7) Which of Jesus' disciples famously denied knowing him three times?

- Peter
- John
- James
- Andrew

8) Who was the woman at the well that Jesus spoke to in Samaria?

- Mary Magdalene
- Martha
- Rahab
- Samaritan Woman

9) What miracle did Jesus perform at the wedding in Cana?

- Healing a blind man
- Feeding the 5000
- Turning water into wine
- Walking on water

10) Who was swallowed by a large fish and survived for three days?

- Jonah
- Daniel
- David
- Solomon

11) What is the golden rule that Jesus taught?

- Do unto others as they do unto you.
- Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
- Do unto others as you please.
- Do unto others as they please.

Teaching your Children
How to Pray



We live in a fast-paced, technology-driven world where words like "friend," "follow," "handle," and "like" have been appropriated thanks to social media and AI seems to be the proverbial magic pill from trading stocks to coming up with fresh recipes based on the leftovers in your refrigerator. It seems technology is developing at lightning speed and our generation's parents were wary of bad influences from neighborhood kids we are wary of cyberspace. With the proliferation of cheap handheld devices, free Wi-Fi, and lax online gatekeeping, our children's behaviours and psyche are moulded by the internet. Unfortunately, due to careers, distractions, and challenges of modern life, as parents, we are reduced to background influencers.

Considering this, nurturing the spiritual growth of our children is crucial now more than ever. As a father of four energetic and exceedingly inquisitive children, I want to nurture that spirit of wonder and at the same time teach them how to develop their relationship with our Heavenly Father. Teaching our children how to pray is a foundational aspect of their faith journey. Through some research and introspection, I discovered some practical points to empower my wife and I and hopefully other parents and caregivers in

“Teach your children various forms of prayer, including prayers of Thanksgiving, Intercession, Confession, and prayers of Supplication.”

teaching children how to pray in the modern age.

Introduce the Concept of Prayer Early:

As soon as your child begins to understand language, start introducing the concept of prayer. Keep it simple at first, explaining that prayer is talking to God, just like we talk to our friends and family. Encourage them to speak to God about their joys, concerns, and thanksgiving.

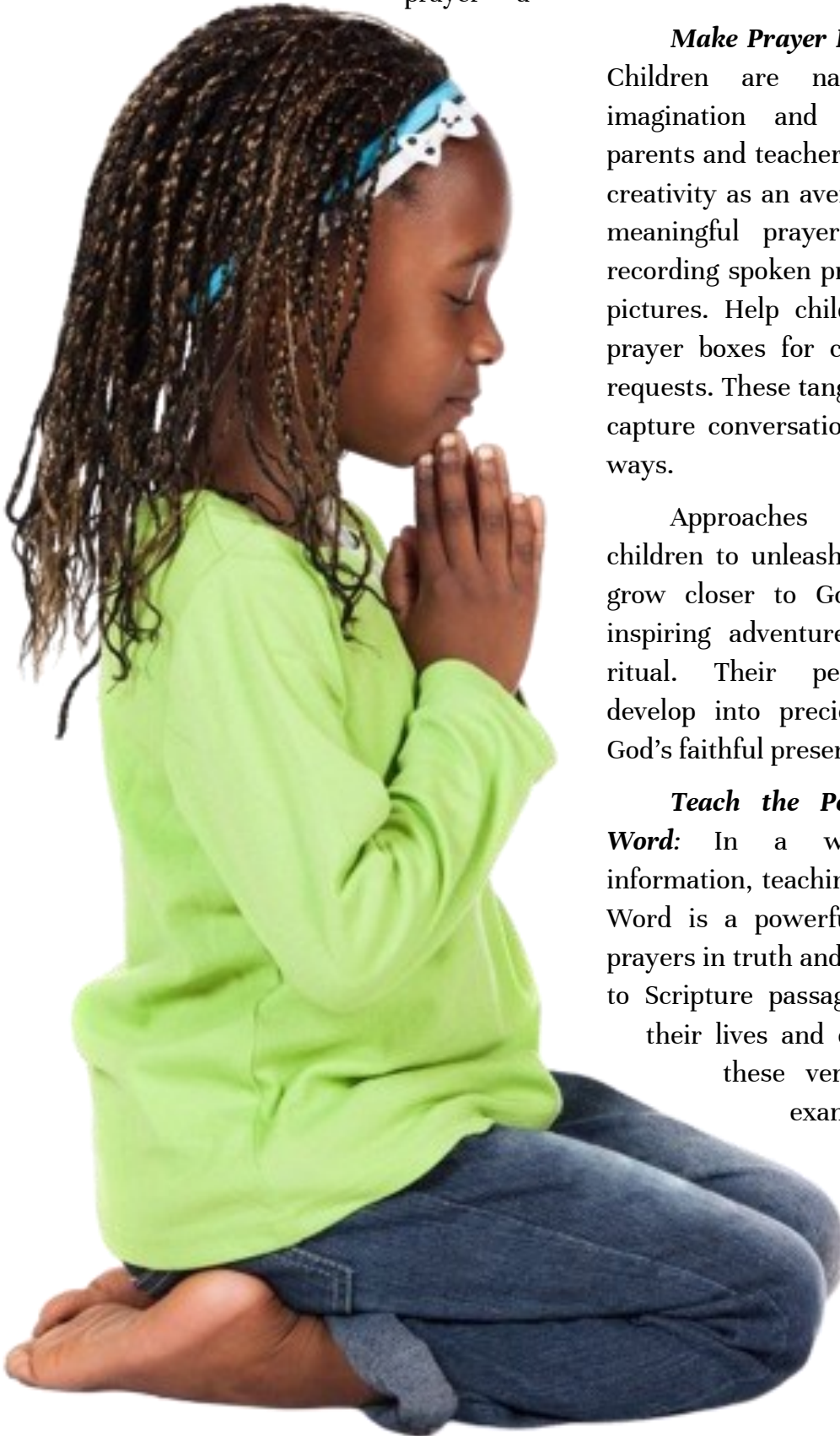
Embrace Technology as a Tool for

Prayer: Rather than seeing technology as at odds with prayer, we can use it as a valuable tool to nurture vibrant prayer lives in children. Apps, websites, and online resources offer interactive, age-appropriate prayer experiences. For example, the "YouVersion Bible App for Kids" makes God's Word come alive through vivid illustrations and engaging activities.

Consider also incorporating technology into family prayer times at home. We have the

YouVersion Bible App on their tablet and they listen to a selected Chapter each night as a bedtime story. Beyond just listening though, video chat capabilities on phones and laptops open doors for children to pray with grandparents, cousins or friends who live far away. Virtual prayer gatherings like these not only foster community but also show kids firsthand how technology can enable powerful prayer connections. As tools for encountering God, let's redeem technology to reinforce prayer, not replace it.

Lead by Example: Children learn by example, so let them see you praying regularly. Make prayer a



natural part of your daily routine, whether it's before meals, bedtime, or during family devotions. Show them that prayer is not reserved for special occasions but is a continual conversation with God

Make Prayer Interactive and Creative: Children are naturally bursting with imagination and creative potential. As parents and teachers, we can encourage this creativity as an avenue that leads them into meaningful prayer. Provide journals for recording spoken prayers or drawing prayer pictures. Help children make personalized prayer boxes for collecting written prayer requests. These tangible items enable kids to capture conversations with God in creative ways.

Approaches like these empower children to unleash their creativity as they grow closer to God. Prayer becomes an inspiring adventure rather than a boring ritual. Their personalized expressions develop into precious keepsakes charting God's faithful presence through the years.

Teach the Power of Praying God's Word: In a world inundated with information, teaching children to pray God's Word is a powerful way to anchor their prayers in truth and faith. Introduce children to Scripture passages that are relevant to their lives and encourage them to pray these verses back to God. For example, teach children to pray Psalm 23 for comfort during difficult times or Philippians 4:6-7 for peace amidst anxiety.

Engage children in

memorizing Scripture verses related to prayer, and incorporate them into daily prayer routines. Encourage them to personalize these verses by inserting their names or specific prayer requests, empowering them to claim God's promises in their prayers.

Teach Different Forms of Prayer:

Prayer is not limited to reciting memorized words. Teach your children various forms of prayer, including prayers of thanksgiving, prayers of intercession (praying for others), prayers of confession, and prayers of supplication (asking for specific needs). Encourage them to express themselves authentically in their prayers.

Praying with Transparency and Honesty: As parents, one of the most powerful ways we can model prayer for our children is through authenticity and vulnerability. Kids should see firsthand that speaking openly and honestly with God is a cornerstone of prayer. Rather than masking feelings or presenting polished prayers, be real. Voice aloud the messy conversations you have with God, such as intercessions mingled with doubt or tearful yet trusting requests in painful seasons. Allow children to witness raw, genuine interactions that show prayer goes far beyond reciting platitudes or wish lists.

Emphasize Listening: Prayer is a two-way conversation. Teach your children the importance of listening for God's voice in their hearts and minds. Help them understand that God speaks to us through His Word, through the Holy Spirit, and the

Apps like "YouVersion Bible App for Kids" makes God's Word come alive through vivid illustrations and engaging activities.

circumstances of life. Encourage them to be still and listen for God's guidance and comfort.

Encourage a Lifestyle of Prayer Beyond Specific Requests:

In a culture focused on instant gratification and quick fixes, it's essential to teach children the broader significance of prayer beyond asking for specific requests. Encourage children to pray for others, including friends, family members, teachers, and even those they may not know personally. Teach them the value of intercessory prayer and how their prayers can make a difference in the lives of others.

In the modern age, teaching children how to pray is not only essential but also an opportunity to foster a vibrant and dynamic relationship with God. By embracing technology as a tool for prayer, making prayer interactive and creative, teaching the power of praying God's Word, and encouraging a lifestyle of prayer beyond specific requests, parents and caregivers can empower children to develop a lifelong habit of seeking God in prayer. As we guide our children in prayer, may we witness the transformative power of God at work in their lives, shaping them into faithful disciples who boldly approach the throne of grace with confidence.

*Direct your children onto the
right path and when they are
older, they will not leave it.*

Psalm 22 vs 6



TAOQA
Kids



**African Helix
Group**

In Pursuit of Excellence & Beyond...

Knowledge

Empowers,

Training Unleashes,

Join the Revolution.



WHO WE ARE

African Helix Consulting is a diverse and innovative corporate training and skills development firm dedicated to improving and streamlining organisational processes. From Business Intelligence to End User Computing and from Customer Service to self-management programs and beyond.

OUR CATEGORIES

END USER COMPUTING

BUSINESS & SOFT SKILLS

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

HOSPITALITY STUDIES



CORPORATE TRAINING

We can personalize and deliver ecost-effective virtual & instructor-led training



TRAINING SUPPORT

We design and supply expertly researched training material for providers.



BUSINESS CONSULTING

The purpose of coaching lies in helping people come to terms with their goals.



+27 64 811 5344
+27 10 477 8956



alvin@africanhelix.com
www.africanhelix.com



Birchleigh,
Kempton Park, JHB



With my mortal fear of commercial kitchens and the “not always hygienic” culinary shenanigans that occur, I am always on the look out for homemade recipes for my favourite fast food indulgencies. Today we explore the **Breakfast Burger** and the classic **Chicken Nuggets**. So grab your apron and get ready to embark on a culinary adventure that'll leave you licking your fingers and wondering why you ever bothered with those fancy diet plans. Because let's face it, life is too short to say no to bacon and cheese – especially when they're sandwiched between two perfectly toasted buns!

Homemade Breakfast Burger

Ingredients:

| | |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| 500g | Ground beef (makes 4 patties) |
| 4 | Burger buns |
| 4 slices | Cheddar cheese |
| 4 slices | Bacon |
| 4 | Eggs |
| 1 | Tomato, sliced |
| | Lettuce leaves |
| | Gherkins, sliced |
| | Salt and pepper to taste |
| | Olive oil for cooking |

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Instructions:

- Cook the bacon slices in a skillet over medium heat until crispy, about 8-10 minutes. Remove from the skillet and drain on paper towels.
- Divide the ground beef into four equal portions and shape them into burger patties.

Season each patty with salt and pepper.

- Heat a grill or skillet over medium-high heat and brush with olive oil. Cook the burger patties for about 4-5 minutes per side, or until desired doneness is reached. During the last few minutes of cooking, place a slice of cheddar cheese on each patty and allow it to melt.
- While the patties are cooking, fry the eggs in a separate skillet until the whites are set but the yolks are still runny, about 3-4 minutes.
- Toast the burger buns on the grill or skillet until lightly golden, about 2-3 minutes.
- To assemble the burgers, place a lettuce leaf on the bottom half of each bun, followed by a tomato slice, a cooked burger patty with melted cheese, a slice of bacon, a fried egg, and a few slices of gherkins.

Serve: Top with the other half of the burger bun and serve immediately.



Homemade Chicken Nuggets

Ingredients:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 500g | Boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces |
| 1 cup | All-purpose flour |
| 2 eggs, | Beaten |
| 1 cup | Breadcrumbs (plain or seasoned) |
| 1 teaspoon | Garlic powder |
| 1 teaspoon | Paprika |
| 1/2 teaspoon | Salt |
| 1/4 teaspoon | Black pepper |
| | Cooking oil for frying |

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Portions: Serves: 4

Instructions:

- Cut the chicken breasts into bite-sized pieces, ensuring they are relatively uniform in size for even cooking.
- In three separate shallow bowls or plates, place the flour in one, beaten eggs in another, and breadcrumbs mixed with garlic powder, paprika, salt, and black pepper in the third.

- Dredge each chicken piece in the flour, shaking off any excess. Then dip it into the beaten eggs, allowing any excess to drip off. Finally, coat it evenly with the breadcrumb mixture, pressing gently to adhere.
- In a large skillet or frying pan, heat enough cooking oil over medium-high heat to cover the bottom of the pan (about 1/2 inch deep). The oil is ready for frying when it reaches 175°C on a thermometer or when a breadcrumb sizzles and turns golden brown when dropped into the oil.
- Carefully place the breaded chicken nuggets in the hot oil in a single layer, making sure not to overcrowd the pan. Fry for about 2-3 minutes on each side or until golden brown and cooked through. You may need to fry in batches depending on the size of your pan.
- Once cooked, use a slotted spoon or tongs to transfer the chicken nuggets to a plate lined with paper towels to drain excess oil.

Note: Cooking times may vary depending on the size and thickness of the chicken pieces. Make sure to adjust accordingly to ensure they are cooked through.





THE MAMMOTH

BURGER



IT'S NOT
JUST
FOOD.
IT'S A
LIFESTYLE



CRISPY CHICKEN BURGER



BEEF/CHICKEN WRAPS



CHEESE BURGER



CAESAR SALAD



ICE CREAM



CHICKEN/RIBS PLATTER



SPICY CHICKEN WINGS



DOUGHNUTS

DELIVERY
+27 64 811 5344

KEMPTON PARK
JHB, GAUTENG

TO ORDER:
WWW.MIKHIEMOUTH.COM



MONSTERS

I was always a fearful child with a wild imagination. I was afraid of the dark. Afraid that loud motorcycles would literally make my ears bleed. Afraid that if I released the bath water while I was still in the tub, the drain would suck me down along with the bath water. Afraid that if I accidentally swallowed bubble gum it would balloon in my stomach and eventually decorate my bedroom walls with my innards. Afraid to walk past a graveyard lest the undead hordes rise and reenact Micheal Jackson's Thriller video with me as the silver-gloved icon. Afraid that the spider living in my closet would one day come out and decide to lay its eggs in my nose while I slept. Most of all I was afraid of

the family of ghouls and vampires that lived in my bedroom curtains. I would see them dance and frolic in the floral patterns whenever my mother switched off the light during bedtime. I would scream my lungs out and my mother would come in, give me a big reassuring hug, and sit with me till I fell asleep. One night, however, after the usual ghoulish curtain disco commenced, I screamed once again. My father kicked down the door, a deep earth quivering roar on his lips, a blazing sword in his hands with a big red "S" on his chest while gliding on roller skates, ready to slay any monsters that threatened his favourite son. I did mention my wild imagination, right?

He shook the curtains and assured me that they were nothing more than printed cloth. He grabbed me by the shoulders,

looked deep into my eyes and told me there are no such things as monsters. I don't know if it was his voice, the sincere look in his eyes or maybe that growing-up thing people always spoke about, but I believed him.

However, as an adult, I have come to the crushing realization that my majestic dragon-slaying father was wrong, monsters and ghouls do exist. However, they are not blood-sucking vampires, bandage-wrapped revenants, closet-dwelling boogeymen or bipedal wolfmen from the movies. No. These, dare I say "real" monsters are of our own making. When we were babies, we spent most of our time with clenched fists. Experts in paediatrics will tell us that it is due to a neurologic reflex called palmar grasp or that is simply instinctual, mirroring the curled position we had in the womb. Some cultures believe, however, that it is more spiritual. The clenched fists represent all the blessings, ideas and hopes for the future that the good lord bestowed upon us during our time in heaven.

As we grow older and are taught to grasp worldly concepts, we relax our hands and let go of said blessings and hopes in favour of corporeal trinkets. The education system "educates" all the creativity and wonder out of us and after that life beats us down so much and so frequently that we end up settling for mundane easy wins. The books we wanted to write, the businesses we wanted to start, the portraits we wanted to paint and the houses we wanted to build are packed away in a wooden box and forgotten about. We enter the rat race and schlep our way through life in a muddled stupor.

After a long life of trudging, clawing, and scraping just to get by we come to our final chapter, old, decrepit with our best years behind us. It is during these quiet

moments with no fight and even less resolve left that we are haunted by our monsters. Having risen from the wooden chest we buried them in so many years ago, they surround us. After years of neglect, all the hopes, expectations and potential has been twisted, corrupted, and perverted into grotesque horrors. Large, long-toothed, bat-winged, fire-breathing, scaly, barbed tail and very angry. With yellow eyes that bore deep into our souls, they ask "Why?". Why we never gave them life. Why we let them die in the womb. Why we allowed life to waylay us and fill our days with empty worldly vanities. And they haunt us till the day we shed our mortal shells.

I believe **God** gives us dreams and aspirations with the end game of manifesting his greatness. We are living in an age in which **God** is looking for soldiers of vision and execution. These visions are both the very purpose of your existence and the very substance of who you are as a person. What you dream of accomplishing in your life is **God's** way of getting you involved in his Master Plan.

At birth, you were gifted a set of goals and qualities with the purpose that you would live out your desires, pursue your dreams, develop in life and most importantly be a builder of **His** kingdom. So lay that first brick for your house, write the first sentence of your book and throw the first splashes of paint on the canvas, take any step no matter how small towards your dream. Trust that the **God** Who splits seas, defies death, heals the infirm and gives sight to the blind most surely can help your dreams come to realisation. And by following your **God** ordained path, you will stave off some ghouls and goblins.

Upgrade Your LIFESTYLE

We are specialists at sourcing luxury furniture, designer lighting and supplying one off pieces unique to you using only the best manufacturers who produce high quality and bespoke items for a demanding clientele.



Birchleigh, Kempton
Park, JHB, Gauteng

lynnett@leemlifestyle.com

www.leemlifestyle.com

+27 73 114 3092

+27 83 278 2344

My HOLLYWOOD MBA

By Critical Chris

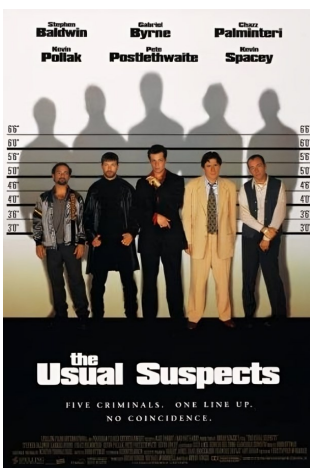
In the world of cinema, storytelling often transcends mere entertainment, offering profound insights into various aspects of life. Surprisingly, some of the most compelling narratives also contain valuable lessons applicable to the realm of business. From tales of entrepreneurial spirit to explorations of leadership and ethics, certain films serve as more than just a source of leisure—they serve as a classroom for learning invaluable business principles.

I wrote my first article of an intended series back in 2020. Since then life happened but my love for movies and TV series never diminished. Apart from the escapism and fantasy I realized back then that through captivating storytelling and relatable experiences, movies have the power to inspire, educate, and provoke thought on the complexities of the business world. So, grab your popcorn and get ready to uncover the business lessons hidden within the frames of these 4 classic cinematic masterpieces.

The Usual Suspects (1995)

Director: Bryan Singer

Starring: Stephen Baldwin, Gabriel Byrne, Chazz Palminteri, Kevin Pollak, Benicio del Toro



This is essential viewing for fans of captivating psychological thrillers, especially those with a penchant for intricate plot twists. The narrative revolves around a band of seasoned criminals brought together during a police lineup, who subsequently join forces to orchestrate a high-stakes heist.

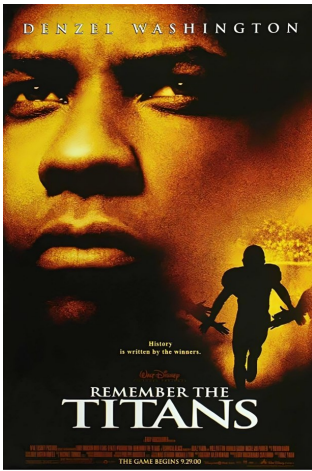
Why Watch it?:

The movie explores themes like the consolidation of leadership, the dynamics of power and influence, and the intricacies of long-term business strategy, offering valuable insights for entrepreneurs, both

Remember the Titans (2000)

Director: Boaz Yakin

Starring: Denzel Washington, Will Patton, Donald Faison, Nicole Ari Parker, Giancarlo Esposito, Wood Harris



This compelling movie portrays the real-life journey of Coach Herman Boone, who is entrusted with the challenging mission of integrating a racially divided high school football team in Virginia. Confronted with significant external challenges and internal tensions, Boone endeavors to bring his players together, nurturing a bond of brotherhood and collaboration among them.

Why Watch it?:

"Remember the Titans" provides valuable lessons on team building, emphasizing the significance of transcending prejudice and biases.

Lord of War (2005)

Director: Andrew Niccol

Starring: Nicolas Cage, Jared Leto, Bridget Moynahan, Ian Holm, Ethan Hawke



For fans of dark comedies packed with action, "Lord of War" is a must-watch. The film follows the life of Yuri Orlov (played by Nicolas Cage), a Ukrainian immigrant who finds success in the illicit arms trade.

Despite the moral implications, Yuri embodies the essential traits of successful entrepreneurs: ambition, perseverance, and a willingness to take risks. .

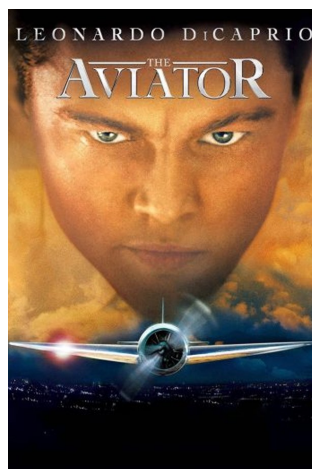
Why Watch it?:

The film provides extensive insights into growth hacking, fostering customer loyalty, and negotiation tactics. Finally, if you are good at something, become the authority on it.

The Aviator (2005)

Director: Martin Scorsese

Starring: Leonardo DiCaprio, Cate Blanchett, Kate Beckinsale, John C. Reilly



DiCaprio stars as Howard Hughes, a billionaire and aviation magnate who is celebrated publicly for his directorial successes in Hollywood and behind the scenes, he's also known for his romantic involvements with leading ladies in movies. He also played a pivotal role in the development of TWA as a major airline. However, he battles private demons, including debilitating phobias and depression, which threaten to overshadow his achievements.

Why Watch it?:

To challenge a dominant player in the industry, you must embody innovation, creativity, a willingness to take significant risks, and perhaps a touch of eccentricity. This inspiring film exemplifies Howard Hughes' remarkable leadership abilities and his unwavering

THE WRITER'S BLOCK

In our continuing efforts to evangelise and share the gospel and how God is working in our lives, we invite you to share your talents and experiences with other readers through the medium of storytelling and poetry. If you are an aspiring, budding or experienced author or poet, please read through our submission guidelines below and in addition we advise that you subscribe to our social media feeds. We regularly update them with the sort of work we are looking for and give writing prompts for story ideas. Please note that all submissions are made on speculation; we cannot guarantee publication.

How to Prepare Your Manuscript

- ***Taqa Magazine*** is a free offering and all of its staff are volunteers, therefore ***Taqa does not pay for Short Fiction, Flash or poetry contributions.*** However as circulation increases we have plans to change the policy. For now credit the author with a profile on our website and social media feeds.

- o Poetry should be 1,000 words or less.
- o Non Fiction anecdotes must be up to 500 words.
- o Short story prose should be between 1 000 – 1 200 words, no more.
- o We are a Christian magazine so submitted content, has to have to have a Christian theme. The main requirement however, is that the content should enlighten the reader. An enlightening story does not suggest that difficult and trying events do not occur in a story. Challenging subjects can be dealt with, but there must be an optimistic purpose and conclusion in its telling. With our eclectic audience I believe it goes without saying that all submissions contain - no graphic violence, crude language including curse words, or explicit sex.

Please familiarise yourself with the content of our previous issues and our website (www.taqamagazine.online). You will get to appreciate the motivation and mission of the magazine.

- o Short fiction submitted to the magazine must be original and previously unpublished. ***Taqa*** considers work that has appeared online (including on blogs and Facebook) to be previously published. Simultaneous submissions to other publications are acceptable. However, if your work is accepted elsewhere first, please withdraw your submission.

All manuscripts must be typed in English, Double-spaced and sent as Microsoft Word (.doc, .docx) or Open Document Text (.odt) attachment:

Set font size to 12 and use Ariel font.

- o Include the author's name, Email address, phone number, short bio (200 words or

less), written in 3rd person. You can include a personal high-resolution colour photo (1-5 megabytes is sufficient), but this is optional.

- o Approximate word count at the top of the first page, and numbered throughout.
- o We do not accept novel excerpts.
- o There are no submission deadlines, unless there is a specifically stated deadline for a themed issue. We receive submissions on a rolling basis and notify on a rolling basis.

As previously stated, at this time, there is no payment due to the author for acceptance/publication. Contributors will receive credit in the magazine and may be promoted on our social media and website.

If your work has already been accepted, we will send you an e-mail when we publish the issue that contains your work. If you haven't heard from us yet, don't worry. We will read your work and get back to you.

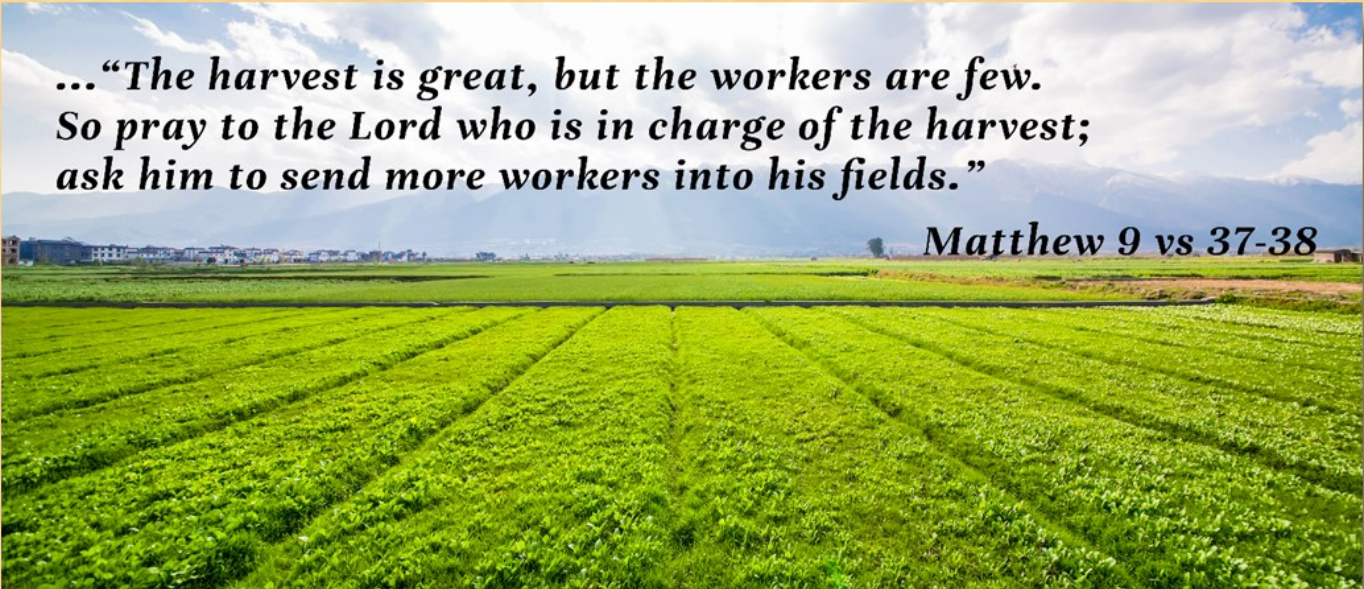
How to Submit

Email your manuscript as an attached file to lynnett@taqamagazine.online

- The editor may request revisions to the submission to better fit the goals of the particular issue and the interest of our readers.

Please allow 2 weeks for a response to submissions or queries

NB: Taqa Magazine Reserves the right to make minor copy editing changes to the manuscript. Any major editorial changes will require author's approval prior to publication.



***...“The harvest is great, but the workers are few.
So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest;
ask him to send more workers into his fields.”***

Matthew 9 vs 37-38

Revolutionising Savings:

7 Innovative Ways to Save

W "Welcome to the year 2024, where financial stability feels about as elusive as finding an 8-legged purple unicorn ordering a McFlurry at McDonalds. With inflation on steroids and prices of basic goods suddenly sprouting wings, it's no wonder we're all clinging to our wallets like they contain a backstage pass to Heaven. In a world where financial stability is paramount, accounting for every cent has become an essential skill. However, traditional methods like budgeting and cutting expenses can only take us so far. To truly revolutionize our savings, we need to think outside the box and embrace innovative strategies that not only help us save but also adapt to the dynamic nature of our finances. But fear not, fellow frugalists! Your friendly

neighborhood Penny Pincher is here to help you navigate the dense jungle of economic uncertainty with the grace of a crippled monkey suffering from severe vertigo. Elegance is overrated anyway. So grab your pen and pad, unzip the fanny pack, and let's dive headfirst into the murky waters of saving the Rand in 2024.

1. Automated Micro-Saving Apps:

Marvel at the wonder that is modern technology!

Gone are the days of stuffing money in a mattress like Gogo did (and probably still does). Now, we can harness the power of automated micro-saving



apps to do the heavy lifting for us. Imagine every time you splurge on that latte and that extra-large chocolate muffin, these apps swoop in like financial superheroes, rounding up your purchase to the nearest dollar and whisking away the spare change to a savings account. Apps like Stash by Liberty aren't just your run-of-the-mill savings sidekicks. Stash and apps like it, use fancy algorithms to analyse your spending habits and calculate the perfect savings amount that won't cramp your style. So go ahead, embrace the power of technology, and watch your savings grow,

2. Cashback Rewards for Everyday Spending: Maximize your savings by utilizing cashback rewards programs for your everyday spending. Cashback rewards programs are gaining popularity in South Africa across various industries like banking, retail, telecommunications, and travel. Major banks offer cashback rewards as part of their credit card or banking packages, enabling customers to earn rewards on transactions and everyday activities. Standalone cashback apps are also popular, partnering with merchants to offer rewards on purchases online and in-store, sometimes with personalized offers based on spending habits. To maximize savings, consumers should understand program terms and conditions, including fees, and capitalize on earning opportunities to achieve financial

“Using Energy-Efficient Home Upgrades is like giving your house an eco-friendly makeover, turning it from a fossil fuel guzzler into a money-saving machine!”



goals.

3. *Energy-Efficient*

Home Upgrades: It's like giving your house a little eco-friendly makeover, turning it from a fossil fuel guzzler into a lean, green, money-saving machine! Swapping out your old light bulbs for LED ones is like upgrading from a candle to a spotlight. And let's not forget about energy-efficient appliances – they're like the warriors of the kitchen, banding together to fight against energy waste and save you money in the process. Though the upfront cost might make your wallet cringe, the long-term savings on your utility bills will have you and your wallet smiling again.

4. *Meal Planning and*

Batch Cooking: Save both time and money by adopting meal planning and batch cooking techniques. By buying ingredients in bulk and cooking in large quantities, you're not just saving cents – you're saving dollars too. Say goodbye to overpriced restaurant meals and hello to homemade goodness that won't break the bank. So go forth, brave kitchen warriors, armed with your meal plans and Tupperware battalions. With meal planning and batch cooking by your side, you'll not

only conquer mealtime chaos but also emerge victorious in the battle against food waste and overspending.

5. Renting Out Unused Space: Why let your extra space go to waste when you can turn it into a money-making machine? It's like turning your home into a mini cash cow! Who knew your spare room could be more than just a dumping ground for old socks and forgotten hobbies? With apps like Airbnb, you'll be rolling in dough faster than you can say "Welcome stranger." Before diving into it though, make sure you do your research into the pitfalls and dark corners of allowing strangers into your home. Just make sure your guests don't accidentally wander into your 'secret hideaway' closet. You know the one I'm talking about.

6. Negotiating Subscriptions and Bills: Don't hesitate to negotiate lower rates on your existing subscriptions and bills. Whether it's your internet service provider, insurance premiums, or even your DSTV package, a simple phone call to inquire about discounts or promotional offers can result in significant savings over time.

7. Subscription Sharing: This is a bit of a controversial one. Subscription sharing extends across various services, including streaming platforms like Netflix, music streaming services like Spotify, and even software subscriptions for productivity tools and entertainment apps. The appeal lies in the ability to access premium content or services without bearing the full financial burden individually. However, there are important considerations to keep in mind.

Firstly, many subscription services have terms of use that explicitly prohibit

sharing accounts with individuals outside of one's household. Moreover, subscription sharing raises questions about accountability and fair usage. From a legal standpoint, the legality of subscription sharing in South Africa remains a grey area, as there are no specific laws addressing this practice. Despite these considerations, subscription sharing continues to be a popular practice, driven by the desire for cost-effective access to a wide range of digital services. You need to approach subscription sharing responsibly, respecting the terms of service of subscription providers, and maintaining transparent communication with sharing partners.

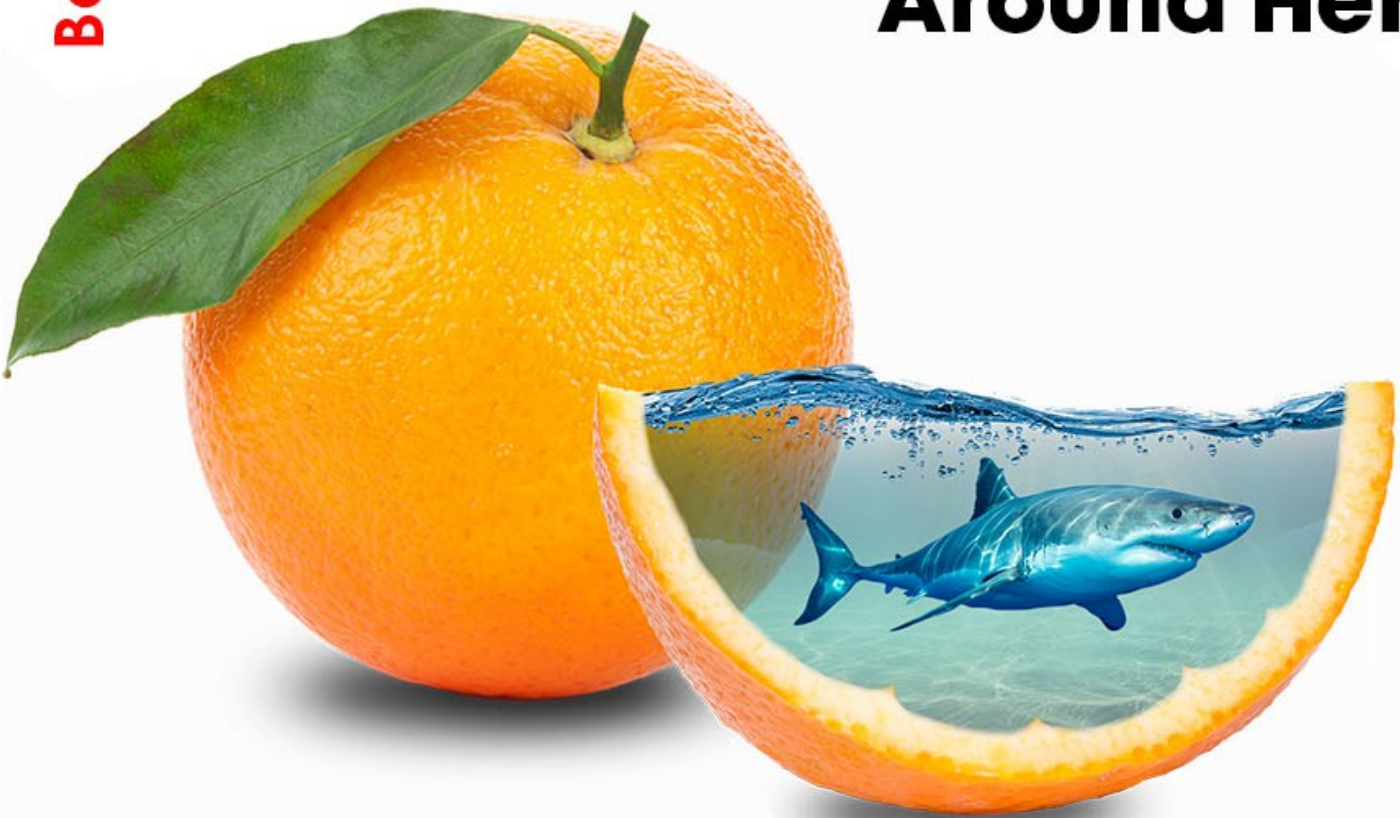
As we bid a fond farewell until the next issue one thing is abundantly clear: the landscape of personal finance is ever evolving, and so must our approach to saving money. From leveraging the power of technology to embracing unconventional tactics like subscription sharing and Cashback Rewards we've uncovered a treasure trove of creative solutions to bolster our financial well-being.

As we navigate the twists and turns of our financial journeys, let us carry these saving strategies with us like a trusty map, leading us toward a brighter, more secure future. So go forth, fellow Pinchers, and may your wallets be fat, your bank accounts healthy, and your spirits ever lifted by the knowledge that in the ever-changing landscape of personal finance, innovation is our greatest ally. But that's just my two cents.

Because Ordinary ^{is}

Just Too Mainstream

We Do Things a Little
Differently
Around Here.



+27 87 265 1521
+27 81 479 2536
alvin@nativealiens.co.za
www.nativealiens.co.za

Expert Graphic Design Studio



Native Aliens
MEDIA



+27 78 036 9682

lynnett@taqamagazine.online

www.taqamagazine.online



“So be content with who you are, and don’t put on airs. God’s strong hand is on you; he’ll promote you at the right time. Live carefree before God; he is most careful with you. .”

Proverbs 3 vs 5-6