



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND DEPARTMENT OF
JUSTICE**

**SPEECH BY HON. (RTD) JUDGE PAUL KIHARA KARIUKI, ATTORNEY
GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING THE DAYSTAR
UNIVERSITY'S 40TH GRADUATION CEREMONY**

HELD ON JULY 7 2018 AT THE ATHI RIVER CAMPUS.

Prof. Mary Murimi, The Chancellor of Daystar University;

Rev. Dr. Macmillan Kiiru, Chairman of Daystar Company Board;

Members of the Daystar Company;

Mr. Don Odera, Chairman of Daystar University Council;

Members of Daystar University Council;

Rev. Prof. James Kombo, The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Daystar University;

Mr. Bill Boulware, Member, Daystar U.S. Board;

Mr. Alan Cooke, Executive Director, Daystar U.S. Office;

Mr. Malele Ngalu, Chairman of Daystar University Alumni Association;

The Vice Chancellors of Other Universities;

Members of the Diplomatic Community present;

**Archbishops, Bishops and Members of the Clergy;
Faculty, Staff and Students of Daystar University;
The Graduating Class of 2018**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is not often that I get the opportunity to stand before such a large and esteemed convocation brought together by the common purpose and desire to celebrate the fruits of self-application and excellence. I am, therefore, honoured and privileged to grace the 40th graduation ceremony of Daystar University.

They say life begins at 40. In a sense, therefore, this gathering is occupying the cusp of a cycle that is coming to a sterling closure and at the same time ushering a season that portends better tidings and greater hopes.

Forty—as many of you will recall—also has profound Biblical significance. And steeped as I am, in biblical teaching and instruction—my father having been a Bishop—I couldn't help but appreciate the divine symbolism of this particular graduation ceremony. Apparently, the number 40 is symbolic both in Islam and Christianity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Forty appears 146 times in the Bible. Generally, it symbolizes a period of testing, trials and probation. Our Lord Jesus Christ fasted in the desert for 40 days and 40 nights during which period he was severely tested by the Prince of Darkness. Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days and nights while fasting when he received the Ten Commandments. Prophet Elijah walked 40 days and nights to reach Mount Herob in order to flee King Ahab and receive the Lord's instructions. Just like the aforementioned, he went

without food or water during this period. The children of Israel endured insufferable ordeals before they entered the Promised Land.

The moral behind the few inferences cited here that make the number 40 all the more significant is that each of them ended on a triumphant note. Your academic journey thus far—whether it has yielded a certificate, diploma, bachelors, masters or doctoral degree—is itself a mark of achievement befitting of celebration and thanksgiving. Beyond this ceremony, may the graduating cohorts gathered here today know God’s favour and endless triumphs at every step of their lives and careers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All the human endeavours we undertake are adjudged successful not for starting them or trying out and abandoning them mid-course but for finishing the task in one gets involved in to the very end. The very act of

finishing has a way of soothing the injuries inflicted by missteps we may have suffered along the way and compensating for pains occasioned by the race to our target destination. Few, if any, sojourns—academic ones included—experienced full potential if those involved walk alone. That is why I want to thank the University, the Faculty, the administrators, family members and all others who provided support—moral or otherwise—to these extraordinary individuals whose academic accomplishments we are gathered here to celebrate today.

[A round of applause to the graduates!]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme of this graduation ceremony, **“Transforming Africa and the World through Excellence and Integral Leadership”** caught my eye for its unmistakable relevance, immediacy and timeliness. Our beloved country—as the case is in the better part of Africa—is beset with challenges much akin, at least in magnitude and severity, to the trials faced by the our Lord

Jesus Christ and the prophets of old. Look, for instance, at how corruption, nepotism, poverty and inequality, environmental degradation, unregulated technological advancements—just to mention a few—have disfigured our world and scuttled the hopes of millions!

In my younger days at Law School we read many the works of such notables as Thomas Hobbes, William Shakespeare, William Blake, Waldo Emerson, Jane Austen, V.S. Naipaul, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and many others. Some of these gems imprinted abiding insights in our then supple minds. Yet they ought not frighten us to silence or inertia. Thomas Hobbes, for instance, an English philosopher on political theory once famously described human life as “...solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short”, but is that necessarily a life sentence? Matters of life this side of Heaven may get dreary yes but, Hobbes, most certainly did not ossify human destiny to the state of affairs he so aptly described.

I believe that through the pursuit of **excellence and integral leadership** the world can indeed, surmount the despondency and sense of predestination that afflicts those in authority with inertia or paralysis of will. It is incumbent upon each of those graduating today to purpose to become change agents whose tools of trade should include **excellence and commitment to leadership geared towards transforming the hopes, aspirations and destinies** of humankind. What you have received today are the instruments that empower you for that task.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This University is founded on Christian values and principles and it has, I am persuaded, what it takes to nurture individuals who regard integrity as the cornerstone of character building. In his seminal publication, “The Republic”, Plato captures the essence of integral leadership in ruminations Socrates had with Athenians. Apart from focusing on the meaning of justice,

he develops a framework on the nature of leadership in an ideal state. The conclusion is that leadership is for the good of those who follow, the common good, the good of all. It is not possible to pursue the course of common good for all unless a leader is enamoured of an unyielding quest for personal integrity.

In a world overtaken and easily mesmerized by the glitter of ostentation and conspicuous consumption, one must fortify his or her resolve to embrace integrity in the face of scornful friends bereft of the desire to wait and do it right. Your steadfastness in walking the narrow and straight path will beget longer lasting dividends in the fullness of time. Besides, this is where the Almighty God's blessings reside.

Ladies and Gentlemen and the 2018 Daystar Graduates in particular

As this University releases you to the world today, remember you are already well prepared to become transformational and servant leaders. Let

me hasten to also remind you that effective and transformative leadership is not about the size of the office, age or gender of the leader or the background of the leader. It is the actions and mental attitude you display that confirms your leadership acumen. Remember the little boy who stuck his finger in the dyke to save his city? Or the little two brothers who rescued their expectant mother recently as landslides in Murang'a carried homes to the precipices? The lesson is that we can all be leaders.

Graduates, as you now embark on another phase of life, practice the values instilled in you by this institution. Mathew 5:16 says "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." How then one, may ask, can I let my light shine so others can see? First, know yourself. Unclutter your mental faculties to avoid disruptions and be guided by good intent in every undertaking you get involved in. That way you will become an agent of empowerment with no bounds.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Those of us who came to celebrate with the lot graduating today have a duty to encourage them to be open-minded. After all, the work of education is to expand horizons and uproot limitations that are caused by ignorance. Buddhists say that “...in the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities, in the experts mind there are few.” Science bears that wisdom witness as captured in “The Journal of Experimental Social Psychology” in November 2015. A paper published in this document confirms that a series of experiments deduced that "self-perceptions of expertise increase closed-minded cognition."

Besides having a probing and open mind, the other trait that will move for you mountains is humility. Humility allows you to learn and adopt. It eases relationships and increases respect in your favour.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When you integrate God's principles with your unique talents, skills and character, you create a powerful the most ideal scaffolding for building a purposeful career and life. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, "We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed."

William Blake's poem, "From Jerusalem" opens with elegant lines that offer our graduates a gem of precious wisdom. They read;

"I give you the end of a golden string,

Only wind it into a ball,

It will lead you in at Heaven's gate,

Built in Jerusalem's Wall..."

The golden string is in your hand - the rest awaits your action. Go and prosper and be who you were meant to be.

May the Spirit of the LORD rest upon you, may the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD always guide your path.

Thank You and God Bless