

Grains of Sand Book Review

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Grains of Sand (Karanja, 2006) is an inspiring story of human perseverance and achievement. Dr. Benson Karanja (2006) presents his personal journey from his childhood on an African farm to becoming the president of an American University. While reading, I sensed an individual while still in his youth, convey strength and purpose during challenging times. Obviously, his upbringing and family background made a tremendous imprint on his life. The sacrifices that he made, speak to his determination to follow a course of action he felt that God had for him. Many times, our background, and environment influence our outlook for the future, however, in Dr. Karanja's case, his willpower and focus overshadowed his poverty and suffering. Being exposed to only farm life could easily impact one's potential, but it only strengthened Dr. Karanja's resolve and taught him life lessons.

The Continent of Africa is historic, with a remarkable saga, and the writer was blessed to have been born in this setting. From being born on a farm, he rose to become a successful businessman in Kenya, and socialized with the elite of his country. He was well aware of the divide and the separation of the races until freedom came. Children were able to play and hold hands, where previously it was not permitted. Dr. Karanja's father heavily influenced him. As a cook, his father was able to provide for his family and afford them privileges that many of his friends were unable to enjoy. By working on the farm, he was exposed to books, and as he read them, made a lasting impression upon him.

Being raised in the church, he knew the hymns and stories of the bible. His parents brought he and his siblings up in the church. As a result of his Christian upbringing, he felt that God had a plan for his life and cared for his concerns. School is important in the life of any person. Dr. Karanja excelled in school but due to a lack of resources, was limited from attending the school of his choice. Obtaining employment was necessary to assist the family with income.

Dr. Karanja was successful in becoming a trailblazer in a management program. He was extremely concerned about impacting his community and making a difference.

Farming taught him principles for life. He eventually started his own business and began to build a client-base. During his travels, he met a young lady named Esther who would eventually become his wife. Dr. Karanja was driven. He had a vision and a purpose. He knew that a college degree would strengthen him in the marketplace, so he set out to obtain his education. He had no idea that God was ordering his steps to eventually leave Africa for America. All of his struggles, his experiences, would prepare him for an American lifestyle which was completely different from what he was used to.

God spoke to Dr. Karanja and told him to leave everything for America. He was also instructed to go to a Bible college while in America. When he mentioned it to his wife, she did not share the same vision. This move did not even make sense to Dr. Karanja, he knew business, but could not fathom why he was heavily impressed to attend a Bible college. He was accepted in several schools in America. Beulah Heights made an impression upon him, and he felt that God had opened a door for him.

Many people felt that Dr. Karanja had lost his mind, but he held to his conviction. America was not the land that he envisioned once he arrived. He lived in deplorable conditions. His wife became sick and needed medical attention, but because they were immigrants they were mistreated. Dr. Karanja went from owning a business in Africa to becoming a janitor for a living. His perseverance was remarkable! He continued his quest for multiple degrees. His drive propelled him to travel while working full-time to obtain postgraduate degrees. His faithfulness to every job opened unlimited doors. He met Dr. Chan, who was impressed by his integrity and his abilities. Dr. Chan eventually recommended Dr. Karanja to succeed him as president of Beulah Heights. God used his faithfulness, his humility, his fortitude to promote him to fulfil the

destiny God prepared for him. His suffering and embarrassment would become the cornerstone for an extraordinary life of service and benevolence.