

The e-Scroll



Women's Fellowship Edition
September 2020

*She gets up while it is still night;
she provides food for her family
and portions for her female
servants*

*She considers a field and buys it;
out of her earnings she plants a
vineyard*

*She sets about her work vigorously;
her arms are strong for her tasks*

Proverbs 31: 15-17



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Pastor's Message

By Revd. Sandeep David



God does not depend on our character or background while choosing us to serve Him. Samaritan woman is a story of a sinner turned evangelist. This promiscuous woman became a link between Samaritans and God. Samaritans were a group of mixed-race Jews. They claim their descent to Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph and to the Levites. 2 Kings 17:24-41 tells us that after the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel and Samaria in 722BC, people from other parts of the Assyrian empire viz. Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Sepharvaim and Hamath were brought to settle in Samaria to replace the Israelites. The Israelites were taken into exile in Assyria though some were left in Samaria. The new settlers in Samaria were attacked by lions. An exiled priest was sent from Assyria to teach them to worship God and to please Him to avoid any such future incident. The priest taught them how to please God alongside worshipping their gods. Because of this syncretism, the Jews despised the Samaritans calling them impure

In the book of Ezra chapter 4 when the Samaritans offered help for reconstructing the temple the Jews refused. Following this, the Samaritans constructed their temple at Mt. Gerazin. The Samaritans had only the Pentateuch as their religious scriptures because the prophets of the Old Testament served in Jerusalem and Judea and not in Samaria. They were a sort of half-Jews and were despised. Therefore, the woman Jesus was encountering belonged to a group of socially ostracized people who were being suppressed from centuries. The Samaritan Woman is the story of grace to the undeserving and a sinner turned evangelist. Let us now look at some of the qualities of this woman and what we can learn from her.

Humility

Women usually came in the morning and evening to fetch water from the well. This lady was humble she knew her reputation and came at noon to avoid meeting anyone who knew her. She knew her limits evident from the fact that she said to Jesus that He was a Jew while she was a Samaritan and that too a woman. This woman remained within the limits of society and Jesus used her in her setting. She changed the norms of society remaining within the system and hence without annoying anyone.

She was reluctant to give Jesus the drink. The woman did not argue with Jesus when he mentioned that she was a promiscuous woman. She accepted her unworthiness. However, Jesus had greater plans for this woman. He was about to use her to evangelize the whole of Samaria and to use her to bring many to faith. When we accept our unworthiness, we believe in God and depend on Him as He chooses us to serve Him and to become a blessing to others. He stands against the haughty but exalts the humble.

Pastor's Message

By Revd. Sandeep David

This woman is an example of God's plan for the undeserving

The woman who was despised by the world, the woman who was seen as a taboo, no one would have ever offered anything good to her. Jesus is offering her the most precious and priceless thing ever – the living water. This is how God looks at His people. It is not important who we are but what God can do through us. She found favor in the eyes of God through the Messiah. She did not refrain herself but opened her heart to the teachings of the Messiah.

This lady believed Jesus and accepted the authority of the Messiah when she said, “give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.” To the world, she was a promiscuous woman, but Jesus looked at her as His daughter. He could see in her a prospect evangelist. The second person of Trinity did not condemn her for her sins. He, probably, understood the circumstances that led her to such a life. People of God are to understand each other rather than condemn. God has a plan for every sinner.

Innocent but a believer

This lady was innocent but not ignorant. She knew her scriptures and was expecting the Messiah. This lady encourages us to read the scriptures and know about the depths of the Bible despite our sinfulness. However, she could not comprehend what Jesus was saying to her when He spoke to her about the living water. She did not know Jesus and was surprised when Jesus never had anything to draw out water, yet He was talking about living water. She compared the eternal God with Jacob and asked Him if He is greater than Jacob. To be included in the salvation plan of God you do not need to be an expert in the Bible, doctrines or ways of God but you need to have a believing heart conducive to the gospel of Christ. She asked the question, but she was not a skeptic. She believed when her questions were answered. When God answer our questions do we come to faith and take up the call?

Love for others

After the woman believed she thought of her neighbors. She went and reported to others in the town. She was a promiscuous woman and certainly would not have had a good reputation. People hated her and of course, she also must be having some grudge against them, yet she wanted them to be saved. In the kingdom of God, we are called to reciprocate hate with love. She never kept the blessing limited to herself she shared it with others. Her call was more important to her than her preference for people. The woman teaches us to love despite being hated.

The Samaritan Woman stands as an icon of faith

The encounter with the Messiah was too great a news to be kept with her. She rushed to share it with others. She could have thought who will believe her because of her reputation. However, she went to share the news. It was not her personality or image but the effectiveness of the gospel that was to win people to Christ. They did not believe her words but the power of God working through her convinced them. Their faith was further strengthened because they had seen and heard Jesus. Had this woman focused on her weaknesses rather than on God's grace she would not have shared the news and brought people to faith. When God chooses us to work for Him, we need to focus on His strength rather than on our weaknesses.

Pastor's Message

By Revd. Sandeep David

The woman is an example of grace to the undeserving

Jesus is crossing boundaries here. According to Rabbinic laws a man talking to a woman publicly, even to his wife, was not acceptable. More so this woman belonged to a group of socially ostracized people i.e., the Samaritans who were considered untouchables by the Jews. Sometimes we think we are too great a sinner or too insignificant in the world to be used by God. Greatness is not in using or giving authority to the deserving but to empower the undeserving in the mission of God. A weak group of slaves defeating the powerful armies of Canaan exhibits the hand of God. If we think we are undeserving and unfit for the mission of God just look at this woman and carry on with faith. If God could use her, He can use us as well.

The story tells us that God is above human boundaries

The woman tells Jesus about the dispute the Jews and Samaritans had regarding the place of worship. Jesus tells her that the Creator of the universe can be worshipped anywhere because more important in worship is the spirit and truth. Every race and every corner of the earth is created by God. It is our personal experience with God that marks our entry into His presence.

Conclusion

The Samaritan Woman is a story of sinner turned evangelist; a taboo transformed into a blessing. No matter how great a sinner we are, what reputation we hold in society, how well versed we are with the scriptures if God has chosen us for His mission, He will carry us further. Jonah made excuses, initially, Moses also did not respond positively but this woman was excited to meet her Messiah. Women must be given proper role and opportunities in ministry. The Bible records many female leaders in the Old Testament. Though we must not generalize but while His Apostles fled from the persecution site the women remained with Him until He died on the cross and were the first to reach the grave on the Resurrection Day. Mary Magdalene was the first evangelist to deliver the good news of Resurrection.

In the early church, woman made great contributions. Paul calls them his co-workers. Phoebe was a deaconess. In the early church pastors, deacons, bishops all were synonymous terms. Though the Bible is written from a male perspective in patriarchal society, women also have an equal role in the plan of God, and we find women of God working very hard and honestly in the Bible and even today.

This woman was not a reputed lady. She had her weaknesses, yet God used her mightily and she will be remembered whenever the Gospel is preached because she believed and took the call. The Samaritan Woman is an icon of humility, grace, innocence, love, service, faith, trust and hope in God. She teaches us to take up the call and work for Him even in our weaknesses for God can use us in whatever situation we are. She teaches us to focus on His grace and power rather than on our weaknesses.

With Blessings,
Rev. Sandeep David
Presbyter-in-charge
Christ Church Noida & GN

Associate Pastor's Message

By Revd. Augustine Simon

Lydia – A Businesswoman from
Thyatira In the book of Acts
“The Lord opened her heart”

Lydia was a businesswoman, a “seller of purple,” and probably one of the most successful and Influential women of Philippi. But more than that, she was a seeker after truth and thus became Europe’s first convert. Though in her era, she no doubt represented the “new woman” of determination, foresight and generosity.

Paul tells us that he and Silas sat down and spoke to the women gathered there. The outstanding woman among them was this businesswoman Lydia, a Gentile, who worshipped the one God of the Jews.



She listened to Paul as he related his story of the new gospel proclaimed in Jerusalem by Jesus Christ and now spreading westward into Macedonia. As Lydia listened, we are told in Acts, the Lord opened her heart and “She attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul.” What a fervency of spirit, what deep humility, what keen foresight, what indomitable courage it took on Lydia’s part to accept the story of this new gospel. She had found the truth for which she had been searching. Lydia was beset with fears no longer. She put Christ first and business afterward, and went forward and was baptized, as were members of her household. After her baptism Lydia humbly spoke to Paul, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house, and stay.”(Acts 16:15) Lydia desired with all her heart to know more about the new truth of Christ, and she knew she could receive it best from Paul, who had carried the gospel from Jerusalem to Macedonia.

Not only did Lydia invite Paul and Silas to come to her, but Paul tells us that she “constrained us,” that is, she overcame their reluctance and insisted that they share her hospitality. She showed her bold commitment by hosting the Church in her home, even after Paul and Silas had been beaten and imprisoned by the local authorities; she opened her doors to Paul and Silas.

The Lydia we meet in Scripture comes through as a strong and competent person; yet she was warm and openhearted. She was both a follower of the Lord and a leader of God’s people; a key figure in the young church Paul planted at Philippi. She will ever stand among the immortal women of the Bible, for she picked up that first torch from Paul at Philippi and carried it steadfastly. She was one of many to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ through Europe and then farther westward. Women like Lydia made up a large part of the very early Church.

Mary: The most Favored and Burdened Mother of All Ages

By Anandkumar Peter

While the Catholic order goes all out to worship Mary, the mother of Jesus, the protestant and other denominations stop short of accepting Mary as an instrument of God to incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. Some of the early theologians like Martin Luther and Cavin honoured Mary for the role she played in furthering the Kingdom of God but cautioned against unconstrained elevation of Mary's status in Christian worship. Martin Luther said of Mary: "the honour given to the mother of God has been rooted so deeply into the hearts of men that no one wants to hear any opposition to this celebration... We also grant that she should be honoured, since we, according to Saint Paul's words [Romans 12] are indebted to show honour one to another for the sake of the One who dwells in us, Jesus Christ. Therefore we have an obligation to honour Mary. But be careful to give her honour that is fitting.



Unfortunately, I worry that we give her all too high an honour for she is accorded much more esteem than she should be given or than she accounted to herself." Despite Luther's polemics against his Roman Catholic opponents over issues concerning Mary and the saints, theologians appear to agree that Luther adhered to the Marian decrees of the ecumenical councils and dogmas of the church (out of the scope of this article). He held fast to the belief that Mary was a perpetual virgin and the Mother of God.

In contrast to the above position, the person of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and her place in the Economy of Salvation – within Catholic theology, is all-important and is raised to the stature of the foundation of their faith. Mary is seen as having a singular dignity above the saints. The Catholic Church teaches that she conceived without original sin, therefore receiving a higher level of veneration than all other saints. Catholic Mariology thus studies not only her life but also the veneration of her in daily life, prayer, hymns, art, music, and architecture in modern and ancient Christianity, through the ages.

I don't intend to get into this long-drawn, so far unresolved contradiction in the theological suppositions about Mary. Nevertheless, I wish to firmly affirm that Mary the mother of my Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son, has a very special place and reverence in my heart. She was special, the chosen of God. This began to manifest when she was just 14 or 15 years old. The Gospels according to Matthew and Luke, and the Quran describe Mary as a virgin. As per the prevailing custom this young girl was betrothed to Joseph. It was an agreement to marry her off to Joseph, an engagement, and the marriage would happen years later when they will live as man and wife.

The heavy responsibility, which no other woman ever bore, was burdened on her tender shoulders when the angel made the pronouncement that she will conceive by the Power of the Holy Spirit and will give birth to the Son of God, who in reality is God incarnate, God the Son (from a Trinitarian perspective, I strongly believe in). The society would have stigmatised the young woman, despite her acceptance by Joseph as his wife. We can well imagine the accusing looks she might have suffered as she went about her daily chores, the gossip she would have overheard as she went to the well to draw water.

Mary: The most Favored and Burdened Mother of All Ages

By Anandkumar Peter

God who was in her, taking the human form, and the Divine strength she might have drawn from that knowledge, must have given her the courage to look into the eyes of her accusers and mockers rather than hide her face in shame. Yes, she could not have felt ashamed of her circumstances; how could the mother of God be ashamed?

Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth could not have been just a social call or looking for someone to confide in. Mary sees the most remarkable thing about God and hence the visit: God is about to change the course of human history. The most important three decades in all of the time are about to begin. She knew God was occupying Himself with two obscure, humble women—one old and barren but bearing a child of an extraordinary purpose in his later life, and the other a virgin bearing a child who is God incarnate! And Mary is so moved by this vision of God, the lover of the lowly, that she breaks out in song — a song that has come to be known as “the Magnificat” (Luke 1:46–55). Mary and Elizabeth are wonderful heroines in Luke’s account. He loved the faith of these women. The thing that impressed him most, it appears, is the lowliness but at the same time the cheerful humility of Elizabeth and Mary.

In those days, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was in an advanced stage of pregnancy.—Luke 2:1–5.

When most others travelled in comfort, along with equally fortunate friends and relatives, the mother of God travelled, perhaps, on foot or a donkey. Scripture does not say anything otherwise. Lowly and insignificant as they were, Mary and Joseph must have struggled through the hilly terrain to reach Bethlehem. The joyful thought that she is about to bring to this planet a Son who is God, secretly harboured in her heart, must have made the hardships feel inconsequential to Mary.

The birth of God the Son was an ordinary event which went unnoticed by all those who thronged Bethlehem. It is amazing how this, seemingly natural event, happening in the life of a humble young woman on this earth had led the Angels in Heaven into euphoria, so much so, that their songs, glorifying God, could be heard on earth! This young woman, Mary, however, knew the great marvel she was carrying and was about to bring forth into this world, naturally and in perfect human form. She conceived without sin and on that fateful night, she gave birth without sin.

As they eventually found a stable, a carved-out opening on the side of a hill, sharing space with animals, Mary, inexperienced and alone did not complain. All around them in the Inns, and the houses of the rich and mighty, people were making merry, eating and drinking and addressing the guests of honour, as ‘lords.’ Little were they aware of the great blessing, something that would change the world forever, God was bestowing on humanity, in the stable close by.

Mary: The most Favored and Burdened Mother of All Ages

By Anandkumar Peter

The birth itself might have been pathetic. Mary went through it naturally, as all women would, but without advice, help, counselling and consolation of elder women. She might have been ill-equipped in matters and substances 'a soon to be a mother' should know or would need. Scripture tells us that, when God the Son was born, Mary and Joseph wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, perhaps made out of Mary's clothes handy at that time. What a humble way to bring into this world the one and the only mighty God? What a humble way for God to enter this world?

In this first scene itself, Jesus puts to shame the entire world for its neglect of the needy, for its selfishness and indifference to the sufferings of others. I would say that He began His teachings right on that cold wintery night as He cried for the first time after birth. Martin Luther puts it as "It shows that the world's greatest wisdom is foolishness, her best actions are wrong and her greatest treasures are misfortunes. What had Bethlehem when it did not have Christ? What have they now who at that time had enough? What do Joseph and Mary lack, although at that time they had no room to sleep comfortably?" I would hasten to add, what have we today, with all the comforts and conveniences of life, when we do not allow Jesus to take birth into our hearts?

Bible is silent on how Mary brought up Jesus, except for the fact that they had to run away carrying the infant Jesus to Egypt in obedience to God's message and live in a strange country for many years. Bible, however, tells us of a conversation between a 12-year-old Jesus and Mary, when Jesus went missing and was found in the Temple engaged in debate with the scholars. Mary's motherly instinct to worry for her Son and the relief when she found Him were natural, though she should not have, knowing who He is and the purpose of His coming into this world. They didn't say much. To Mary's natural question, (Luke 2:48) "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you," the answer that Jesus gave was short, (Luke 2:49) "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" He was telling her, (contextualised in my words), "You are not an ordinary mother to worry about Me. You know I have to begin My ministry, My march toward the Cross. You also know you are ordained to suffer much more when I reach my goal."

33 years Mary had lived with this burden in her heart. And when the time came she did not hide in the house, refusing to witness the ordeal her Son would go through. She wanted to be near Him, as near as the Romans would allow. She wants to be the witness of the redemption of mankind. Mary wanted to witness the birth of the Kingdom of Jesus. God had honoured her with this knowledge. But this favoured woman wanted to see her Son being put to unimaginable torture because she wanted to experience the pain of her Son at every strike with the whip on His back tearing away flesh exposing His bones. She suffered crucifixion in spirit as her Son hung on the tree. The excruciating pain He suffered, Mary suffered in her heart.

Mary: The most Favored and Burdened Mother of All Ages

By Anandkumar Peter

Three Marys or Maries were present at the Crucifixion of Jesus of which one was Mary His mother; three Marys rushed to the tomb of Jesus on Sunday morning with sweet spices to anoint the body of their master to bring to a closure everything concerning Him and as a final act of love for Him. But Mary, His mother was not among the three. She knew the tomb would be empty and they would not find a body to anoint! She had the pre-knowledge of the Resurrection; she believed in it and knew that the Resurrection of Jesus would mark the beginning of the period of Salvation. Not all Divine Mysteries she could have disclosed. What a magnificent character!

Much later, Mary was the source of information for the Gospel writers. She would have cared for John who was entrusted to her by Jesus, with the same love and concern she had for Jesus. She would have been a source of strength to other women in facilitating the formation of the Church, tending to the needs of new converts who would gather in the houses in secret.

How can we not think of a woman like Mary often? I was fortunate to see the place, presumed to be where she was buried. It did not move my heart as it would have for a Catholic. But my heart told me that my unique love, esteem and reverence for her was not misplaced.



Presumed Tomb of the Virgin Mary

Women's Fellowship, Christ Church Noida

By Vinita Caswell



Praise The Lord!

Not until I became an active member of the WFCS, did I understand and realize the significance and importance of this Fellowship. What a God-sent platform for every woman member to come together as a team and serve the Lord! It allows doing something for those who need our time, our talent and our financial, physical and spiritual support.

As believers, at some point or the other, our inner voice inspires us to go out of the way and do something for the Lord, but we are not sure how to go about it. Friends, trust me, WFCS gives ample opportunities to do just that! Raising funds to educate the underprivileged, visiting Orphanages and Old Homes with food and provisions, spending time with the lonely, unwell, housebound people. Spending time with them, listening to their woes, singing for them, praying for them and with them. All of this can give so much joy and comfort to them. A few of us have had the opportunity to witness this on our visit to two Old Homes and a Girls Hostel for the underprivileged.

God willing, when the situation improves, let us strive to work with a vision - as Rev. Sunil Ghazan aptly put. Let us pledge to do something productive and bring a little joy and light in the lives of the less fortunate.

“

Then you will be able to live as the Lord wants and will always do what pleases Him. Your lives will produce all kinds of good deeds, and you will grow in your knowledge of God

Colossians 1:10

”

At the outset of this scroll, I was asked about the theme we would like to consider for the WFCS edition. This set me thinking. Would writing without a theme make the content less spiritual or lacking in Christian Spirit? I look at this differently and so opted for the freedom to express without being controlled by a so-called 'theme'. And so readers, this edition reflects the thoughts and expressions of women who can experience love, joy, wonder, goodness, without being less spiritual or lacking in effort to be Christ-like.



*WFCS & SMF joint visit of Old Age Home on 18th January 2020.
18 members including Philip from Youth Fellowship went to an Old Age Home.*

Women's fellowship had carried dry rations & SMF carried some biryani which everyone ate together & had enough leftovers to provide them with another meal.

All members spent time interacting with our new friends.

Even though, our praise & worship session was short, our trip was fruitful and turned out to be a great source of blessing for everyone!



मख्खी नही मधुमख्खी बनो

By Rashmi Singh



परमेश्वर ने संपूर्ण सृष्टी को ज्ञान दिया है। हर एक प्राणी को ज्ञान उनके हिसाब से बाटा गया है। जो काम उन्हें सौपा गया, उसी तरह वे अपना अपना काम करते है। आइए हम मधूमख्खी और मख्खी के काम पर गौर करते है !

मख्खी क्या करती है? गंदगी पर जाकर बैठती है और गंदगी इधर उधर फेईलाती है, और उसीसे लोगोको बिमारीया होती है। इसी तरह मख्खी के समान मनुष्य भी होते है अपनी गँदगी आजबाजू फहला कर समाज, देश में दशहत, भयं, घुणा पैदा कर लोगो की मनोवृत्ती बिगाडते है। और संपूर्ण समाज मे गँदगी फहलती दिखती है। यह गंदगीभरी सोच या विचार अतिशीघ्र सामाजिक वातावरण मे फहलकर डरावना परिस्तिथी को उत्पन्न करती है। छोटे बच्चीयों से लेकर महिलाओ तक सभी अत्याचार पीडित हो रहे है। यह शैतानी वृत्ती कहा से आती है? व्यक्ती के अंदर से जो बाहर निकलकर दुसरे व्यक्ती के जीवन मे फेलती है। और इस प्रकार यह रोग देशमे फहलते जाता है।

हमे मख्खी नही मधूमख्खी बनना है। क्योकी जगत का अंत समय आ रहा है। सृष्टी का नाश अवश्य है। इसके पहले लोगो को सर्तक करना जरुरी है। मधूमख्खी क्या करती है? मधुरस (शहद) फूलोंसे निकालकर अपनी कुपियोमे भरकर संग्रहित करती है। और मानव को मिठास देती रहती है। मधूमख्खी की तरह हमे भी पवित्रशास्त्र के वचन रोज पढाकार उस का रस स्वाद, उसकी मिठास अपनी अंदर भरनि है। और लोगो को परमेश्वर के वचन का मिठा रस देना जरुरी है।

परमेश्वर से प्रेम रखने वालो को मधु से मिठा वाक्यांश समजने मे कठिनाई नही आती, भजन लिखने वाले ने कहा है " तेरे वचन मुझ को कैसे मीठे लगते हैं, वे मेरे मुंह में मधु से भी मीठे हैं!" (भजन संहिता 119: 103)

दाऊद भजन 119:147-148 मे कहता है यहोवा, मैं तेरी प्रार्थना करने को भोर के तड़के उठा करता हूँ। मुझको उन बातों पर भरोसा है, जिनको तू कहता है। देर रात तक तेरे वचनों का मनन करते हुए बैठे रहता हूँ।

भजन 19:10 वे तो सोने से और बहुत कन्दन से भी बढ़कर मनोहर हैं; वे मधु से और टपकने वाले छत्ते से भी बढ़कर मधुर हैं। इसलिए हमारे शब्द भी शहद की तरह मीठे और चंगा करनेवाले होने चाहिए ।

जो हमे आरोग्यदान और जीवन दान देती है। हमे परमेश्वर का वचन का मधु समान हमारे जीवन मे, हमारे मनमे भरकर लोगोको बाटना है। जिससे लोगोको शांती और समाधान और आशिष मिल सक जो उनको आरोग्यदान के लिये और जीवन के लिये पोषक हो। मधूमख्खी बनो...

People Enter Our Lives for a Reason and For a Season

By Kamna Cowasjee

This lockdown has allowed each one of us to introspect. My thoughts are guided by the loss of a friend, a colleague, a neighbour, Venita Kumar, in the very recent past, in July this year.

It is not as if I knew Venita for very long. Venita & Adml Sushil Kumar came to settle in Noida, post his retirement as Chief of Navy Staff in 2002. They had acquired a second house adjacent to the one they owned and joined them together, modified to perfection into a spacious apartment. Since it was in our immediate neighbourhood, and I had observed work going on for months, it was sheer curiosity that drove me to seek the permission of the contractor, to see the modifications. It was mind-boggling and very tastefully done, upbeat and befitting a king. (Chiefs hold that position, with an entire service looking up to them). But I transgress.



Soon after moving in, they joined Christ Church Noida for worship. In the services, a Chief is a cut above the normal military man. Hence dealings in the initial years were cordial. And then came Rev Dr Paul Swarup in 2004. Besides undertaking the construction of the parsonage, then hall & finally the steeple, Rev Dr Paul introduced & reintroduced many Church activities. The annual fete was reintroduced. Christ Church had hosted three fetes earlier, in 1997, 98 & 99, to help raise funds for paying the residual amounts outstanding after the Church building was constructed & consecrated. This was reinstated in 2004, with the need to raise funds for further constructions as mentioned earlier. After that was done, in 2007 the Chalera outreach project was initiated for which again funds were needed, and the rest is history, as we continue with fetes for increasing outreach activities each year. Also, Church annual family retreats were established.

In 2005 the Lenten Bible studies were introduced. Sector-wise groups were made, and participants hosted these meetings in turn for the period of Lent. Adml Sushil Kumar & Venita were part of our group, comprising sectors 21, 25, 19, 20, and few others. Our association with the Kumar's increased, but was mostly restricted to Lent & fete, where they started hosting the hot-dog stall, with some packages of vegetables from their farm. Slowly they became an integral part of Church activities.

In 2008 the Army Navy Air Force Wives Activity Trust (originally a Delhi based NGO) was re-registered in Noida as a UP based Trust. We were thirteen Trustees, Venita was nominated as Vice-Chairperson & I the Secretary of the Trust. Our contact increased and now with two commonplaces of interest, so did our association. Adml Sushil Kumar was one of the 4 patrons of the Trust. We had common meeting grounds and our association & friendship grew thanks to both Church and Trust activities, and so did our social interaction.

Their demise one after the other, in November & July, has left an irreplaceable void.

People Enter Our Lives for a Reason and For a Season

By Kamna Cowasjee

Now to elaborate on the title of my article. People come into our lives for a reason and a season. Reason and Season are all in retrospect. What I state is personal to my narrative. Many have touched my life in the last thirty years in Noida, but I am naming a few only, in admiration and gratitude. I would like to start with Rev. Col. Lawrence Massey, our founding presbyter. I hold him in awe, for his very perseverance in working towards the establishment of a recognised CNI Church and congregation in Noida. Very few will remember the desolate, back of beyond place we came to, only because we had invested in property here, and had no other place to live in, post-retirement. To envisage the need of a Church here, and to pursue that thought to finally establish one here in Noida, took some perseverance. To conduct service here every Sunday for seventeen years, is a remarkable achievement, topped by the ability to have a building put in place with NIL funds and very meagre contributions by retired veterans and some few civilian believers, in a period before pay commissions improved the financial status of the community, was truly the sign that God was with him and us and it was His will working between us.

Rev. Col Lawrence Massey was God's reason in Noida, and therefore our lives here. Rev. Dr Paul Swarup, another glaring Reason of God, planted in Noida to establish and grow the body of the Church in Noida. His time his Season in Noida, was to establish systems and activities, to further the growth of the Church, to give the sheep direction to help them grow themselves and to look beyond themselves, to the community around them and consciously work towards improving a lot of others.

Rev. Kamal Mall spent fruitful time in Noida, furthering and establishing a Church community in Greater Noida and nurturing it. His vision helped Christ Church celebrate its Silver Jubilee spanning various activities every month through the year. His involvement with the Silver Jubilee team meetings, the bonhomie of working together, is something every member will remember and cherish that memory.

Rev. Sunil Ghazan spent a very short time in Noida, compared to his predecessors. In my mind, the reason why he was sent to Noida was to help make the history of the Church a book in print. It may not be a tome of literature, but it chronicles the history and the effort that went into the building and establishing of the Church in Noida, including snippets of memory of those involved. Posterity needs only to recognise that. A future edition can beautify the text and embellish it.

Here, I come back to Venita, and what I consider the most important reason why God placed her in my life. As is known to all, my son needed to have open-heart surgery in March beginning, to replace a ventricle valve. It was a bolt from the blue, with no previous warning signs at all, no illness or anything to precede it. When dates for surgery were being fixed in the first few days of March, there were no warning signs of COVID/Corona or lockdown. Then boom!! It was upon us the day after we came home. In April & May when the lockdown was at its strictest, with no public transport, it was Venita who was my strength and back up support. As if all the years of building a relationship was only to establish this connection, and that too when in January & February along with other two friends, it was us who were supporting her through her chemo trips to the hospital.

People Enter Our Lives for a Reason and For a Season

By Kamna Cowasjee

And then the tables turned. It was she who was supporting me/us through endless trips to the hospital, day after day, to deal with postoperative complications. Fortunately for me from June onwards I could be with her daily, as family & friends could not travel to stay with her. So you see, our building of a relationship was for a reason, to be redeemed in a season of immense need. God's ways are beyond or comprehension. He works in mysterious ways. It is only in retrospect that we can appreciate the wonders of His works in our lives and be grateful for the opportunities to serve, that He throws in our path.

If He nudges or pushes you to do something, just do it. Don't hold back. It will be for a reason and a season



Rediscovery Of My Grandmother's Drawer

By Nilima Das



If you ever experience a 'low' try rediscovering your grandmother's drawer. It recovers one's spirits better than anything else could have done and you find yourself zooming back to a halcyon past where all the cares were handled by others.

A Cadbury tin full of artificial pearl strings of different sizes brought back a flood of memories of the dresses she wore with different strings. There was a golden brooch shaped like a vine leaf with a scattering of tiny pearls yellowed with age but with a handsome sheen still on them. All this cushioned on a wad of cottonwool about sixty years old. There was even a dragonfly with one emerald eye, tail drooping and one perky pearl wing. The other wing was left golden by the designer.

There was the crystal necklace brought to her enthusiastically by my father from a trip to Geneva. Her hairbrush had a few fine strands of grey hair still stuck in the bristles. She would sit on her bedside after her bath in her crisply ironed nightdress and give her hair fifty strokes. There were a bunch of rusty hairpins. I can see her knotting up her silky grey bun and sliding in the same hairpins. So that her hair did not fall out of place, there were fine nylon mesh hairnets elasticized. A dusty cellophane bag that had seen better days contained a crepe bandage used for emergency ankle sprains; a carton of gauze and strangely enough, balls of neatly rolled twine. I remember having a tooth pulled out with one such length of twine when I was perhaps ten years old. A tissue paper bag with Chinese script – why Chinese script, was full of coins. Delicately I pulled out the black elastic rubber band. And what coins I discovered! Two had the United Arab Emirates inscribed on them. Knowledge of Arabic not being one of my gifts I could not read the denomination. The flip side had a romantic flag on straight out of Omar Khayyam. Then there was a Pfennig with 10 written on it from Deutschland 1969; 1 cent from Canada 1977 with vine leaves. Another Deutsche marked 1959 with oakleaves inscribed in sets of two on either side. The flip side had a splayed eagle with wings spread out in triumph. I must remember this picture when I feel low and square my shoulders.

Then I figured a ceramic ashtray with a dainty conglomeration of pink rose, yellow primula, blue gentian violet and two sprigs of forget-me-nots. I spotted a cross-stitch bookmark – sea green with a round cheese embroidered on it and a mouse. It brought back memories of old Mrs. Sengupta, her 'twin' Grandma always called her because they were the same age. She lived near our house in Ballygunge Place and taught us to cross-stitch. "Remember to always make the back as neat as the front " she would admonish us. She also gave us raffia brooches which we later painted to match our frocks.

I found her reading glasses with see-through grey plastic frames. A narrow carton announcing Ash's woven initials for marking household linen used to identify my brother's things when he was in boarding school.

Rediscovery Of My Grandmother's Drawer

By Nilima Das

Then there was a packet of self-sticking photo corners, a pale-yellow comb, a Japanese fan from JAL which I had borrowed when I led the sopranos in a musical, *The Mikado*, performed on a Delhi stage at seventeen. A screwdriver that Grandma used to fix her iron plugs, a brass paper-knife she needed to slit open recalcitrant aerogrammes from abroad.

Then there was her collection of prayer books. Her Bible with bookmarks presented by friends from all over the world, and William Barclays "The Plain Man's Book of Prayers" with the famous painting done by a Swede. The message in thin sepia print read: "Miss Bertha Valerius, a Swede, in 1856 began this picture under the guidance from the beyond. After many attempts, she being quite untrained in art, the picture (10ft. by 6 ft.) was finished to her satisfaction in 1896. Soon after following the promise of the Angelic Messengers, she passed away peacefully in her sleep. The original occupies the place of honour in a private chapel in Stockholm. By request of the inspirers, there appears beneath the picture, the verse, St. John, 17:9"

I pray for them who thou hast given me, for they are thine.

I needed that message and another that came in the words of J. Dansen Smith.

God ever cares. Not only in life's summers
When skies are bright and days are long and glad,
He cares as much when life is draped in winter
And heart doth feel bereft and lone and sad.
God ever cares! His heart is ever tender!
His love doth never fail nor show decay
The loves of earth, though strong and deep may perish;
But His shall never never pass away."

Thank you, dear Grandma, for leaving me your drawer of treasures.

*She sees that her trading is
profitable,
and her lamp does not go out at
night.
In her hand she holds the distaff
and grasps the spindle with her
fingers.
She opens her arms to the poor
and extends her hands to the
needy.*

Proverbs 31: 18-20



Small Bites

By Merlin Noronha

Every day
Dawn to dusk
Is a struggle
To be Martha or Mary.

Running tasks like Martha
While Mary waits
Just a few more dishes
While Mary waits
Just a few laundries
While Mary waits
Run errands
While Mary waits
Martha complains
While Mary waits
Martha is stressed
While Mary waits
Martha is tired
While Mary waits
Martha is guilty
While Mary waits
Martha is sleepy
While Mary waits



Another day has gone
With a promise
For tomorrow
While Mary waits.

(Often our time with the Lord is postponed or neglected. Our worries of life take away the joy of being with Him. What do we choose, waiting at His feet or rushing around in circles?)

धर्मी माता का जीवन

By Preeti Joseph

एक माँ का अपने बेटे और बेटी के जीवन में बहुत बड़ा प्रभाव होता। माँ के शब्दों और व्यवहार का उनके बच्चों के जीवन में गहरा प्रभाव पड़ता है। बच्चों के विचारों को, व्यवहारों को और उनकी पसंद नापसंद को एक आकार देता है। बच्चे के जीवन में धर्मी या परमेश्वर का भय मानने वाली माता की भूमिका बहुत अहम होती। यह बच्चों के लिए आशीष और सौभाग्य की बात होती है कि उनकी माँ परमेश्वर का भय मानने वाली स्त्री है।

हमारा विश्वास जो प्रभु यीशु में है, हमें आशा देता है और विश्वास से परिपूर्ण करता है, कि हम अपनी समर्थ और साहस प्रभु से प्राप्त करते हुए अपनी जिम्मेदारियों को अच्छी तरह से निभा सकें। एक माँ के रूप में परमेश्वर ने हमें ऐसे स्थान पर रखा है जहाँ हम अपने बच्चों के जीवन में अत्यधिक आत्मिक प्रभाव डाल सकते हैं और उन्हें एक दिशा दे सकते हैं। बाइबल में ऐसी अनेक स्त्रियों का वर्णन है, जिनका जीवन साधारण था, उनकी परिस्थितियाँ साधारण थी, उनका विश्वास भी साधारण था परंतु उन्होंने असाधारण रूप से बच्चों में विश्वास और आत्मिकता जागृत करी जो कि आज, हमारे लिए गवाही और प्रेरणा का स्रोत है।

एक धार्मिक स्त्री का जीवन किस प्रकार अपने परिवार को प्रभावित करता है, 4 प्रमुख बातों पर हम ध्यान देंगे

धर्मी माता अपने परिवार के विश्वास का प्रतिबिंब होती है साधारणता यह देखा गया है कि किसी भी आत्मिक स्थान पर या धार्मिक जगह पर हमेशा स्त्रियों की उपस्थिति और योगदान अवश्य रहा है। 2 तिमोथी 1:5 में हम देखते हैं कि पौलुस किस तरह से यह बताते हैं कि तिमोथी के विश्वास में उसकी नानी उसकी माता का योगदान रहा। यह विश्वास एक धरोहर के रूप में उन्हें मिला। यह ऐसा विश्वास है जो ना तो ढोंगी है, ना नाम मात्र है और ना किसी मुखौटे के पीछे छिपा हुआ है जो लोगों के सामने जरूरत पड़ने पर पहना जाए और फिर उतार दिया जाए, परंतु यह एक साधारण परन्तु पुख्ता विश्वास है, जो परमेश्वर के वचन पर आधारित है, जो परमेश्वर यीशु मसीह के कार्य पर आधारित है। इसी वचन को पढ़ने और यीशु मसीह को समझने के लिए लौईस और यूनिक्स अपना जीवन लगा दिया।

अ। एक धर्मी स्त्री अपना जीवन में ना सिर्फ परमेश्वर का वचन पढ़ने और उस पर मनन करने पर प्राथमिकता देती है परंतु अपने प्रार्थनामय जीवन से अपने परिवार के सदस्यों और आसपास के लोगों के साथ अपना विश्वास बाँटती।

ब। धार्मिक माता अपनी आत्मिक बातों को ना सिर्फ अपने जीवन में लागू करती है परंतु वह उसे एक अभिन्न अंग बना लेती है। धर्मी स्त्री उस हिरनी के समान है जो वचन रूपी नदी के जल के लिए हाँफती है। परमेश्वर के वचन पर वह दिन-रात मनन करते हुए वह अपने जीवन में आत्मिक शांति और आनंद को महसूस करती है। जब वो अपनी आँखें परमेश्वर की ओर लगाती है, तब परमेश्वर उसके साथ साधारण जीवन को लेकर उसे असाधारण बनाते हैं। परमेश्वर उसे परिपक्व या निपुण बनने में सहायता करते हैं। जैसे हम परमेश्वर के सामने अपने आप को खाली करते हैं, परमेश्वर अपनी पवित्र आत्मा के द्वारा हमें भरते हैं और अनुग्रह करते हैं कि हम उनके जैसे बनते जाएं।

धर्मी माता का जीवन

By Preeti Joseph

लोईस और यनिके हमारे लिए एक आदर्श हैं जिन्होंने असाधारण और विपरीत परिस्थितियों (वे गैर यहूदी थे) में भी परमेश्वर के वचन को पढ़ना, उसपर मनन करना और उसे अपने बच्चे को और दूसरों को सिखाने में अपना जीवन बिताया।

सा। एक धार्मिक स्त्री यह जानती है और महसूस करती है कि यह उसकी जिम्मेदारी है कि वह अपने विश्वास को अपने बच्चों के साथ अपने परिवार के साथ बांटे। यह उसकी इच्छा और कोशिश होती है कि वह अपने बच्चों के दिलों में परमेश्वर के लिए प्रेम और उनके लिए सेवा की भावना का विकास करें। माता-पिता दोनों ही बच्चों के विश्वास के जीवन को दृढ़ बनाने में भरपूर योगदान निभाते हैं। परमेश्वर पिता ने स्वयं यह निर्देश माता-पिता को व्यवस्थाविवरण में के छठे अध्याय छठे पद में देते हैं और यह कहते हैं कि जो आज्ञा मैं आज तुझे सुनाता हूँ वे तेरी मन में बनी रहे और तू इन्हें अपने बाल बच्चों को समझाया कर सीखाया कर और घर में बैठे मार्ग पर चलते, लेटते, उठते, इनकी चर्चा किया करे। परमेश्वर ने यह निर्देश दिया है कि हम बच्चों को, अपने आने वाली पीढ़ी के सामने परमेश्वर का जीवित वचन रखे ताकि वह भी परमेश्वर के प्रेम को व्यक्तिगत रीति से चख सकें ताकि यीशु उनके जीवन में कार्य करे। हनना ने जब बालक शेमुएल को परमेश्वर के मंदिर में छोड़ा तो उसे विश्वास था कि, जिस परमेश्वर ने उसे पुत्र दिया है वो ही उसके भविष्य को उज्ज्वल बनेगा।

एक तरफ जहां हम चाहते हैं कि हमारे बच्चों को अच्छा संडे स्कूल टीचर मिले, अच्छे यथ लीडर मिले, अच्छे अगुए मिले, अच्छे पास्टर मिले, यह भी जरूरी है कि, हम यह समझे कि हमारी यह जिम्मेदारी है कि, हम अपने बच्चों को घर में आत्मिक जीवन में आगे बढ़ाएं। हमारा यह समझना अवश्य है कि अगर हम स्वयं आत्मिक रूप से जागरूक नहीं हैं, तो हम अपने बच्चों के लिए प्रेरणा के स्रोत नहीं बन पाएंगे। इसलिए एक घर में माता पहले स्वयं परमेश्वर का वचन पढ़ती है, उस पर मनन करती है, फिर अपने बच्चों के साथ बैठकर कर, वचन पढ़ते हुए, यह वचन रूपी बीज उनके जीवन में बोती है। जब बच्चे स्वयं वचन पढ़ते हैं तब अनुभव के द्वारा उन्हें ज्ञात होता है कि परमेश्वर उन से कितना प्रेम करते। वह अपने लोगों को पापमय जीवन से छुटकारा दे एक आशीषमय और भरपूर जीवन देना चाहते। ऐसा समय आएगा जब वे स्वयं अपना जीवन परमेश्वर को समर्पित कर उसके लिए जीने के लिए हर्षित और आनंदित होंगे। यह तभी संभव है जब हम उन्हें बचपन से ही परमेश्वर के वचन की शिक्षा देते रहें।

2. एक धर्म स्त्री के जीवन में गहरा विश्वास होता है ; यह गहरा विश्वास उसे दुख के समय और विपरीत परिस्थितियों में निर्भय और सशक्त बनाता है। यह धार्मिक स्वभाव, जो परमेश्वर पर अटूट विश्वास पर आश्रित होता है, तभी प्रदर्शित होता है जब हमारी सामर्थ्य परमेश्वर की ओर से आती है और हम हर परिस्थिति का सामना करते हुए, परमेश्वर की महिमा अपने जीवन के द्वारा प्रदर्शित करते हैं। अगर हमारा जीवन परमेश्वर की महिमा में छुपा रहे, उनके वचन हमारे जीवन का आधार हो, तो जब हमारे जीवन में निराशा, दुख, तकलीफ, या अशांति आएगी तब परमेश्वर की रोशनी हम से चमकेगी और दूसरों के लिए हम आशीष और आशा का कारण बनेंगे, हम परमेश्वर के लिए महिमामय जीवन जायेगे। यशायाह 60:1 में लिखा है "उठ प्रकाशमान हो क्योंकि तेरा प्रकाश आ गया है और यहोवा का तेज तेरे ऊपर उदय हुआ है"। परमेश्वर ने अपनी महिमा हम सब पर प्रगट करी है और यह जरूरी है कि हम भी परमेश्वर की महिमा अपने जीवन के द्वारा प्रकट करें।

3. धार्मिक स्त्री दूरदर्शि होती है वो अपने भविष्य को लेकर तैयार और जागरूक रहती। उसे परमेश्वर पर पूरा विश्वास है कि उसका सृष्टिकर्ता उसके भविष्य में उसकी शुद्धि अवश्य लेंगे। उसे यह विश्वास होता कि जिस कार्य में अभी वो सम्मिलित हैं वह परमेश्वर के एक बड़े कार्य एवं राज्य के लिए एक छोटा सा योगदान।

धर्मी माता का जीवन

By Preeti Joseph

वो अपने बच्चों और प्रिय जनों के जीवन में वो खूबी डेकटी है जो दूसरे नहीं देख पाते। पांच कुमारी स्त्रियों के जैसी धर्मी स्त्री अपने भविष्य की पहले से ही तैयारी करती है। आने वाले चुनौतियों से घबराती नहीं परंतु उनका सामना करने के लिए सदैव तैयार रहती है। उनका पूर्ण भरोसा होता है कि जो कार्य परमेश्वर ने आरंभ किया है उसे अपने समय पर अंजाम अवश्य देंगे। प्रत्येक कार्य जो परमेश्वर के अनुग्रह से शुरू होता है, वो परमेश्वर के अनुग्रह से पूरा होगा।

धार्मिक और आदर्श जीवन जीना एक चुनौती है। हमसे अपेक्षाएं बहुत हैं प्रेम, त्याग, सहनशीलता, क्षमा, निस्वार्थ भावना और लिस्ट हमारी कभी खत्म नहीं होंगी। गलती के लिए ज्यादा अवसर नहीं हैं, परंतु अगर परमेश्वर हमारे संग हैं तो प्रभु हमारी निर्बलता में, अपनी समर्थ प्रगट करते हैं, हमें जयवंत जीवन जीने का साहस और मार्गदर्शन देते हैं। आईए हम अपना भरोसा यीशु मसीह पर और गहरा बनाए रखें ताकि हम उस परिपक्वता की ओर बढ़ते रहें।



Strange But True!

By Rita Masih

Strange but true !!!!

- ☞ In spite of so many colours - White is considered Class.
- ☞ In spite of so many voices & sounds - Silence is considered ultimate.
- ☞ In spite of so much to eat - Fasting is considered healthy.
- ☞ In spite of so much to travel & explore - Meditating under trees & on mountains is considered superior.
- ☞ In spite of so much to see - Closing your eyes & looking within is Apex.
- ☞ In spite of listening to all the outside world - Voice from inside you is eternal.
- ☞ In spite of a sweet charming life - A Peaceful Soul is Solace & Divine.

Trust your Senses.
Live a Great Life.



FORGIVE! – How Can I Forgive?

By Vinita Williams

Once upon a time, about two centuries ago, there lived in Bethsaida, in Galilee, two brothers named Simon and Andrew, and both were fishermen. One day while they were casting their fishing net, in the Sea of Galilee, they saw Jesus walking by. He called out to them and said, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men”.

Immediately, they left their father, their boat and their net and followed Him. Jesus renamed Simon as Simon Peter. By and by Jesus called ten more men, who followed Him. These twelve men became His disciples, and, were with Jesus day and night.

At close quarters, they saw Jesus performing mighty miracles, healing various diseases, casting out demons, forgiving sinners, and, raising people who had died. The son of the widow of Nain, daughter of Jairus, and, Mary and Martha’s brother Lazarus, were the astounding examples, which the disciples witnessed.

Jesus used to teach about God the Father, by narrating parables. There were many times when the disciples could not comprehend His teachings. On one such occasion, while they were debating on an issue, a warning came to Peter – from Jesus. He told Peter, “That soon he would be sifted as wheat, by Satan, but the promise, which followed was that Jesus had already prayed for Peter, to be strong in Faith, to be converted and to strengthen his brethren” (Luke 22: 31 – 32).

But Peter was confident that he could follow Jesus anywhere and everywhere, even unto death. Jesus, our Lord and Master knew it any way that Peter will not be able to handle the forthcoming predicament, in his life.

As the time of Jesus’ suffering drew near, the twelve disciples remained close to him. One of them walked away, after The Last Supper, in the Upper Room, in Jerusalem. He betrayed Jesus shortly afterwards, to a band of men and officers from the Chief priests and Pharisees. They came to arrest Him armed with lanterns, torches and weapons.

Since the time Jesus was born, His life was always in danger. His parents had to flee with Him, to another country, as Herod had ordered the massacre of all infant baby boys. They lived in Egypt until Herod died. Later, after His baptism in the river of Jordan, Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit. He fasted for forty days and there he was tempted by Satan. During His ministry, numerous attempts were made by the Scribes, Pharisees and angry citizens to get rid of Jesus.



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Now Judas Iscariot was the person who finally betrayed Jesus. In exchange for 30 pieces of silver, Judas handed over Jesus, to the corrupt authorities. All this was coming true, just as the prophet Zechariah had prophesied. (Zech 11: 12-13)

We read in all the Gospels about the harrowing time Jesus had, at the hands of the Roman soldiers, the Scribes, the Chief priests and of course Pontius Pilate and Herod.

All of the eleven disciples were scattered and must have been watching Jesus their Friend and Master from a distance. A band of soldiers in those days were about 300 – 600 men. We can only imagine what Jesus must have gone through with 600 soldiers, whipping, mocking, spitting on His face and blindfolding Him. Not to forget the crown of thorns placed on the head of Jesus.

Peter remained nearby. He was in a sorrowful and vulnerable state of heart and mind. We read in all the four Gospels, how Peter denied Jesus thrice. No sooner had he denied the third time – the cock crew!! Just as Jesus had foretold, the crowing of the cock came as a jolt to Peter. He realized that after making tall claims, he did deny Jesus Christ. He started crying, as his heart must have been hurting badly. The Bible says – “he wept bitterly”.

All through Jesus’ trials and His crucifixion, Peter carried the baggage of guilt and shame. He went into hiding, as most of the disciples did. Except for John, none of the disciples was near Jesus in His most grievous hours. We know from the Scriptures of Simon the Cyrenian, who helped Jesus carry the cross, and later, Joseph of Arimathea who arranged for His final resting place.

Where were the disciples? The Bible does not mention any names, until the Resurrection Day of Jesus. But we do read about the unbelief and hardness of heart of all the disciples. (Luke 16: 9 – 14 and Luke 24: 12). Peter believed that only when he saw the empty tomb.

We can only imagine what feelings of wretchedness and shame, the eleven must be going through. They could not have faced the Risen Lord on their own. But the magic of FORGIVENESS walks into their lives when Jesus appears to them after His Resurrection. They were huddled in a room for the fear of Jews, and Jesus stood in the midst of them.

He did not condemn them nor punish them. He did not remind them of their unfulfilled promises. He simply forgave them.

The most beautiful part of this narration is in John 21: 15 – 17

As Peter had denied Him thrice, so Jesus asked Peter three times “Do you love me”.

And thrice Jesus said to Peter “Feed my sheep”.

What a burden must have rolled away from Peter’s heart!!

This story is very old, but even today it applies to each one of us, who claim to be Christians and believers of His word. Our weak faith, the hardness of our hearts and our denials do become obstructions in our walk with the Lord.

FORGIVE! – How Can I Forgive?

By Vinita Williams

But once we turn to Him in body, mind and soul, He simply FORGIVES. Our unspoken words of repentance are heard, and, our unseen tears are seen by our Lord Jesus. He in His supreme grace and mercy and love – forgive us.

There is no turning back when we are forgiven. The WAY, the TRUTH and the LIFE are all ours to experience and explore. The Lord's Prayer, which we recited daily, helps us to remember that our sins have been forgiven, just as we forgive all those who sin against us. But the dilemma is: have we forgiven all those who have sinned against us? As frail and feeble human beings, we tend not to forgive easily. We keep nursing the hurt – whether it is physical, mental or emotional.

A young communicant member of CCN, had a bad experience, some months back. He was standing on a roadside in Delhi and was calling up a number on his mobile phone. All of a sudden, a person on a two-wheeler whizzed past, snatching away his phone. By the time he realized what had happened it was too late. "how can I forgive this thief" was his obvious question. The hurt was both physical and emotional. Frankly, I could just advise him to move on, but the pain in his heart was not going away soon.

So what is the solution? The Scriptures have many examples of forgiveness:

Joseph, son of Jacob, forgave his brothers who were mean to him.

The father of the prodigal son forgave the son who caused so much hurt and pain.

The list is long, so I will end here with a few references from the Bible:

Psalms 103: 10 – 12 "He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him; as far as the East is from the West, so far does He remove our transgressions from us."

Luke 23: 34 "And Jesus said, 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do'."

We can utilize a few suggestions in our life, which will help us to forgive others:-

- Uncover / Identify your hurt
- Acknowledge your hurtful emotions and decide to forgive
- Work on forgiveness, with compassion
- Forgive unconditionally
- Love again – as that is what Jesus does.

He forgives us and loves us despite all our recurring weaknesses and transgressions.

Once you forgive you release yourself from an emotional prison. It is not easy, but it is possible.

कमज़ोरी और ताक़त – औरत

By Asha Browne



हमारे आस्मानी बाप ने पहले सारी दुनिया को बनाया और फिर आदम को - यानी सबसे पहला इन्सान आदम था- उसे ये भी बता दिया गया कि जहाँ तक उसकी नज़र जाती है, वो उस पूरी कायनात का अकेला मालिक है. वैसे तो उस जगहो किसी भी चीज़ की कमी नहीं थी, मगर फिर भी कुछ था, जो नहीं था- जिसकी वजह से लगता था, कि कुछ अधूरा सा था. मेरे खयाल में तो आदम का उदास चेहरा, उसकी बूझी बूझी आँखें, उसके सूखे होंठ चिल्ला कर कहते थे कि उसकी ज़िन्दगी में सब कुछ होते हुए भी, कोई जोश, कोई उत्साह नहीं था.

वह जिसकी नज़र से कुछ नहीं छिपता, उसने भी आदम का मुझाया हुआ चेहरा देखा और फ़ौरन ही उसका इलाज भी कर दिया. आदम को पता भी नहीं चला कि उसकी कौन सी पसली निकाल ली गई, और कब. हवा के आते ही बाग़-ए-अदन में जैसे बहार आ गई - चारों तरफ फल, फूल, और हरियाली तो पहले से ही थी मगर हवा ने रंग बिरंगे फूलों की खुशबू पूरे बाग़-ए-अदन में फैला दी. उसने उन फूलों को अपने बालों में सजाना जो शुरू कर दिया - आदम का बुझा बुझा चेहरा भी खिल उठा था – बाग़-ए-अदन अब सच मुच जन्नत बन गया था.

और फिर अचानक वह हुआ जिसकी किसी ने सपने में भी कल्पना नहीं की थी - शैतान की बातों में आकर हवा ने वो फल खा लिया, जिसको उसे नहीं खाना चाहिये था - खुद तो खाया ही, आदम को भी खिलाया - और तब से शुरुआत हुई इन्सान की बरबादी की - नाराज़ होकर खुदा ने दोनो को बाग़-ए-अदन से निकाल दिया. उसकी बरकतों के दौरवाजे दोनों पर बंद हो गए. उन्हें अपनी हर ज़रूरत को पूरा करने के लिये, अपना पसीना बहाना पड़ा. यह बात भी तय हो गई कि इंसान की ज़िंदगी में आने वाला सब से पहला गुनाह " नाफ़रमानी" था और उसकी ज़िम्मेवार हवा थी.

हज़ारों साल गुज़र चुके हैं मगर यह कलंक आज भी हवा के माथे पर लगा है - कोई मर्द इस बात को याद दिलाने से नहीं चूकता. हो सकता है कि नाफ़रमानी का वो गुनाह, सिर्फ हवा की नादानी रहा हो या, उसके अन्दर कुछ नई खोज करने की उत्सुकता. मुझे लगता है, ऐसी ही कोई उत्सुकता "लूत" की बीवी के दिमाग में भी थी - इसी वजह से जब सदूम और अमूरह के ऊपर खुदा के क्रूर की आग बरस रही थी और लूत के खानदान को ताकीद कर दी गई थी कि वो जल्द-अज़-जल्द उस शहर को छोड़ कर बाहर निकल जाएँ, और जाते वक़्त कोई भी पीछे मुड़ कर न देखे, तो उस वक़्त भी, सब तो चले गए, मगर लूत की बीवी ने पीछे मुड़ कर देख ही लिया था - नतीजा आप सब जानते हैं, कि वो नमक का खम्बा बन गई थी.

चाहे नादानी में किया हो, या जान बूझ कर, गुनाह की सज़ा हमेशा मिलती है. हज़ारों साल से हवा की बैटियाँ खुद पर इन गुनाहों का बोझ उठाए अपनी ज़िन्दगी जी रही हैं. अपनी ज़िन्दगी में उन्होंने ने बहुत सी सज़ाएँ भुगती हैं- बहुत से पछतावे किये हैं - तौबा की है - बेइज़्जती बरदाश्त की है, घर में भी और बाहर समाज में भी - कोई ज़्यादा पुरानी बात नहीं है जब यह समझा जाता था कि जहाँ मर्द बातें कर रहे हों वहाँ औरतों का बैठना बिल्कुल मुनासिब नहीं - अपनी ज़बान खोलना तो बहुत दूर कि बात है .

कमज़ोरी और ताक़त – औरत

By Asha Browne

सच्चे दिल से अपने गुनाहों की माफ़ी माँगना, उनके लिये पछतावा करना अपने आप में एक बहुत बड़ी इबादत है, और औरत ने यह इबादत हज़ारों साल से की है - जब आसमानी बाप को इन्सान के लिये नजात का दरवाज़ा खोलना था तो उन्होंने ने हम सब के मुंजी दाता को दुनिया में लाने के लिये औरत को ही चुना. इतने बड़े काम को अन्जाम देने की ज़िम्मेदारी औरत के लिए सिर्फ़ ज़िम्मेदारी ही नहीं थी, उसके सर के लिये एक ताज था- एक ऐसा ताज, जिसे रहती दुनिया तक कोई ताक़त उसके सर से नहीं हटा पायगी . आदमियों ने अपनी अपनी समझ, अपनी काबलियत के हिसाब से औरत को बहुत से नाम दिये - किसी ने कहा "वो हर बुराई की जड़ है", किसी ने कहा "वो वॅनिटी (vanity) है", वगैरह वगैरह -- बहर हाल औरत को कोई भी नाम देने से पहले, दुनिया को इस सच्चाई को ध्यान में रखना पड़ेगा कि वो आदम की पसली है, और उस के बिना आदम अधूरा है.

खुशी होती है यह देख कर कि आज दुनिया औरत को इज़्ज़त देना सीख रही है - वो मर्दों के साथ कन्धे से कन्धा मिला कर खड़ी है, घर हो या समाज, उस की ज़िम्मेदारियाँ बढ़ गई हैं - जिन्हें वो बखूबी निभा भी रही है . वो, जो कभी मर्द की कमज़ोरी थी, आज उसकी ताक़त बन चुकी है.

A Virtuous Woman – Do We Measure Up?

By Millicent Mukha

‘The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.’
How true and appropriate is this maxim? God made woman be His best illustration and vehicle for showing the beauty of love, mercy and commitment.

Walking through a cemetery one day I read an epitaph, ‘She was the sunshine of our home.’ Yes, a Godly woman is a radiant woman, because she radiates her unflinching love for her Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is her teacher, and she submits to his authority.

Being a Godly woman is commendable. Her influence doesn’t just end with her home. She is a homemaker – true. Her influence spreads out in the community as well. She uses her talents and wisdom in organizing her home. She is hardworking and works with eager hands. She is tender and compassionate and reaches out to the needy. She is dignified and well-groomed.
Proverbs 21;22, 25.



The Biblical definition of a woman is very clear. A Christian woman is virtuous, God-fearing, hard-working and charitable. She spends time in meditating upon the Word.

She makes her home comfortable and her children secure – not just with money – but she creates an atmosphere where love and trust are bonding qualities. She ensures that she gives her children constant reassurance of her love. She brings up her children in the knowledge and fear of the Lord, never taking them for granted. She spends time on her knees praying for her children. Prov 22:6 says ‘Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.’ She gives quality time to her children and builds happy memories for them. She enjoys her children and never gives up on any of them. She is an encourager. Prov 19:18 tells us to discipline children when they are young Psalm 127:3 reads that children are God’s precious gift to us. There are innumerable verses in the Bible teaching us how to bring up children.

A godly woman is recognized and appreciated by her husband and her children also call her blessed.

A disciplined woman harnesses her time, money and desires to take control over the ‘self’ in her. An example is the highest form of teaching. What qualities do you exhibit which you would like your children to emulate?

A Virtuous Woman – Do We Measure Up?

By Millicent Mukha

Being a Godly woman we must learn from Jesus our Master. Although Jesus spent most of his time in preaching, healing and performing miracles, He spent a lot of his time in teaching also. When he was just twelve, he was found in the temple speaking to the elders and scribes as one having authority. His famous Sermon on the Mount in Math Chap 5, 6 and 7 he is seen teaching and the crowds listened to him without wanting food and water. When we meditate on His word, we learn to be more and more like Him.

Let us strive to be the Godly woman of Proverbs 31. 1 Peter 3: 1 – 7 also tells us the qualities of a Christian woman. When we submit to the Lord Jesus our cup of blessing will be full and running over. We will be a blessing to others, being fruitful ourselves and experience the 'running over' life.

Events & Notices

By Vinita Caswell

EVENTS

Within Church:

- Monthly Prayer Meetings and Bible Study
- Leading in Sunday Worship on special occasions
- Organizing Praise and Worship occasionally
- Breakfast Sale
- Monthly Handful Offering Sale
- Annual Women's Retreat
- Arranging meals for bereaved families

Outreach Programs:

- Sponsoring the education of 2-3 girls from financially challenged families in the congregation
- Providing dry ration to Home for the Old, Fatehpur Beri
- Visiting Orphanage and Old Home for sharing and celebrations
- 2019 Highlight was a meal prepared by WFCS members and distributed outside Church
- New Project in the bucket list – The Women's Fellowship is currently working on a project which will provide a small income to the needy.



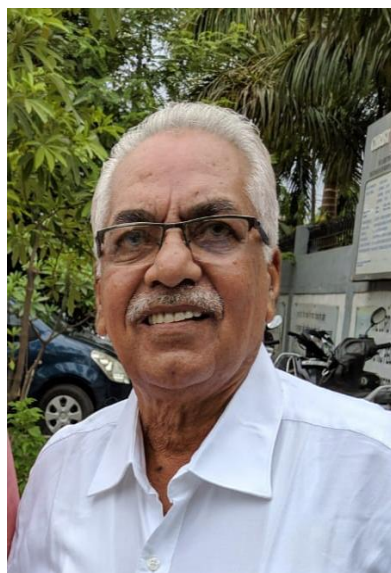


Lead Editor WFCS



Vinita Caswell

Consulting Editor



**Anandkumar
Peter**

Editorial Team



Shefali John



Alex John

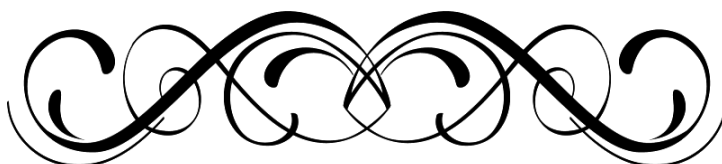


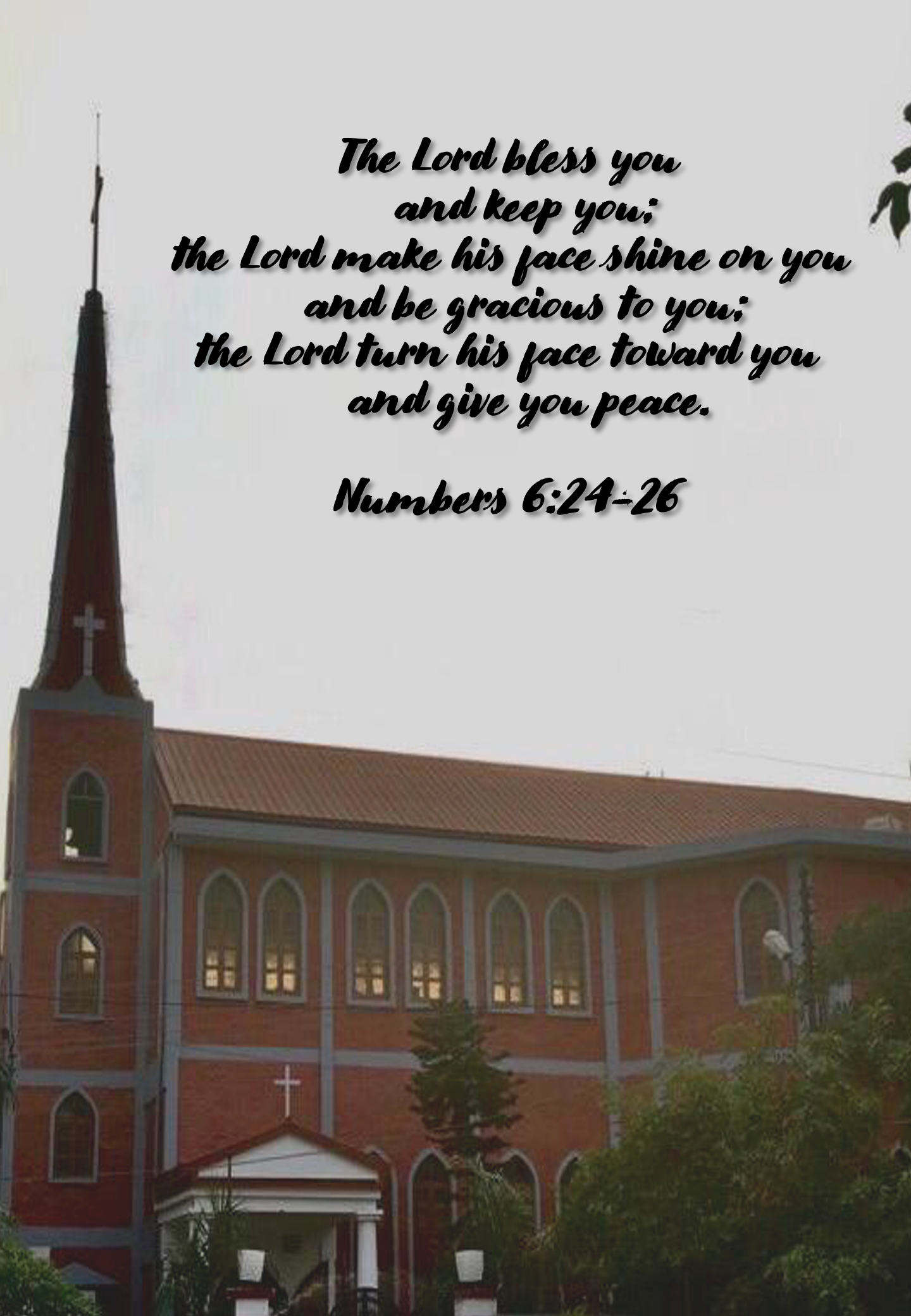
Philip Nath



Stuti Titus

Front Cover



A photograph of a red brick church with a tall steeple and arched windows. The church has a prominent steeple on the left side, topped with a cross. The main body of the church features a series of arched windows, some of which are illuminated from within. The roof is a reddish-brown color. The overall scene is set against a clear sky.

*The Lord bless you
and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.*

Numbers 6:24-26