

From the Editor's Desk



# വളരുമാറാക്കുന്ന ദൈവം

2014 പ്രവർത്തന  
വർഷത്തിൽ  
ഐ.പി.സി.  
മഹാരാഷ്ട്ര  
സ്റ്റേറ്റിന് ഇത്യയിലെ  
മറ്റൊരു സ്റ്റേറ്റുക  
ളെക്കാളും  
ഉയർന്ന വളർച്ച  
പ്രാപിക്കുവാൻ  
ദൈവം ഇടയാക്കി



Pastor P. Joy

പ്രിയ മാസികാ മിത്രങ്ങൾക്ക് വേഗം വരുന്ന യേശുക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ നാമത്തിൽ പുതുവത്സരാശംസകൾ !!!

കഴിഞ്ഞ 24 വർഷങ്ങളായി പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന 'സുവാർത്ത' മാസികയുടെ നിരന്തര വായനക്കാർക്കും, ഐ.പി.സി. മഹാരാഷ്ട്ര സ്റ്റേറ്റിന്റെ അഭ്യുദയകാംക്ഷികളായി, സാമ്പത്തികമായും പ്രാർത്ഥനയിലൂടെയും സഹകരിച്ച ഏവരോടും പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ, അത്യന്തകരമായി പുരോഗമിക്കുന്നു എന്നറിയിക്കുന്നതിൽ അതിയായി സന്തോഷിക്കുന്നു.

പോയ വർഷങ്ങളെ അപേക്ഷിച്ച് 2014 ഐ.പി.സി. മഹാരാഷ്ട്ര സംസ്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ പ്രവർത്തന മേഖലയിൽ വിപ്ലവകരമായ പുരോഗതി കൈവരിക്കുവാൻ ദൈവം സഹായിച്ചു എന്നത് ചാരിതാർത്ഥ്യ ജനകമാണ്. 1990-ൽ കേവലം 16 സഭകളുമായി സമാരംഭം കുറിച്ച റീജിയന്റെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ, ഇന്ന് 300-ഓളം പ്രാദേശിക സഭകളുള്ള ഒരു പ്രസ്ഥാനമായി തീരുവാൻ മഹാരാഷ്ട്ര ഐ.പി.സി. സ്റ്റേറ്റിനു കഴിഞ്ഞു എന്നത് ദൈവനാമത്തിന്റെ മഹത്വത്തിനായി പറയുന്നതിൽ സന്തോഷമുണ്ട്. "നടന്നുവന്നും നനയ്ക്കുന്നവന്നും ഏതുമില്ല; വളരുമാറാക്കിയ ദൈവത്തിന് സകല മഹത്വവും ഇത്തരൂണത്തിൽ അർപ്പിക്കുന്നു. കർത്തൃദാസന്മാരുടെ കഠിനചോരവും സഹോദരന്മാരുടെ നിർലോഭമായ സേവനവും പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവിന്റെ പ്രത്യേക നടത്തിപ്പും ആണ് ഈ വളർച്ചയുടെ പ്രേരകശക്തിയെന്ന് നന്ദിയോടെ അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നു.

ഉയർച്ചകളും താഴ്ചകളും രാഷ്ട്രീയമായ ചലനങ്ങളും സൃഷ്ടിച്ച ഒരു വർഷമാണ് നമ്മെ വിട്ട് കടന്നുപോയത്. എന്നാൽ അതിനു മദ്ധ്യേ കർത്താവ് അനന്യനായി വാഗ്ദത്തങ്ങളിൽ വിശ്വസ്തനായി നമ്മെ പരിപാലിച്ചതിന് കർ

ത്താവിന് സ്തോത്രമർപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

ആകാംക്ഷകളെക്കൊണ്ട് നിറഞ്ഞ ഒരു പുതുവർഷത്തിലേക്കാണ് നാം പ്രവേശിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. നാളെ എന്തു സംഭവിക്കുമെന്ന് ലോകം പ്രവചനാതീതമായി തുറിച്ചു നോക്കുമ്പോൾ അതിന് മദ്ധ്യേ നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവ് ആണ് നമുക്കു പ്രതീക്ഷയും പ്രത്യാശയും "നിന്റെ ഭാരം യഹോവയുടെ മേൽ വെച്ചുകൊൾക, ഞാൻ നിന്നെ പുലർത്താം എന്ന" തിരുവചനമാണ് നമ്മുടെ ആശങ്കകേന്ദ്രം. ലോകനേതാക്കളുടെ മോഹനവാഗ്ദാനങ്ങൾ പലതും പൂർത്തീകരിക്കുവാൻ കഴിയാതെ പോയതിന്റെ നിരാശയിൽ ജനസഞ്ചയം നിൽക്കുമ്പോൾ, ലോകരക്ഷിതാവായ ക്രിസ്തുയേശു മാറ്റമില്ലാത്തവനാണ്. അവിടുത്തെ വാക്കുകൾ മാറ്റമില്ലാത്തതാണ്. നമ്മെ അവസാനത്തോളം നടത്താമെന്ന് വാക്കുപറഞ്ഞവൻ വിശ്വസ്തനാണ്. ഈ പുതിയ വർഷത്തിൽ എന്തെല്ലാം സംഭവിക്കുമെന്ന് നാം അറിയുന്നില്ല. കർത്താവിന്റെ പുനരാഗമനത്തിന് ഇനി എത്രനാൾ അവശേഷിക്കുന്നു എന്നും നമുക്ക് അറിഞ്ഞുകൂടാ. ആയതിനാൽ നമുക്ക് ലഭിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന ആയുസ്സിന്റെ ദിനങ്ങൾ കർത്തവ്യ ബോധവും ഉത്തരവാദിത്വവും ഉള്ളവരായി ദൈവിക പ്രവൃത്തിയിൽ വ്യാപൃതരായി ദൈവരാജ്യത്തിന്റെ വ്യാപ്തിക്കും സുവിശേഷത്തിന്റെ മുന്നേറ്റത്തിനുമായി ജീവിപ്പാൻ ഒരിക്കൽ കൂടി നമ്മെ സമർപ്പിക്കാം. എന്റെ കാര്യം നോക്കിയാൽ ഞാൻ നിന്റെ കാര്യം നോക്കാമെന്ന് വാഗ്ദത്തം ചെയ്ത നാഥൻ ഈ നവസംവത്സരത്തിൽ എല്ലാവിധ സന്തോഷ സമൃദ്ധിയും ആയുരാരോഗ്യവും നൽകി തന്ന് എല്ലാ മാനുഷമിത്രങ്ങളെയും അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ എന്ന് ഇത്തരൂണത്തിൽ പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു, ആശംസിക്കുന്നു.

# GOD:

## *A Magician or an*

# INTELLIGENT DESIGNER?

The Pope recently made a statement that one should not liken the creator God in Genesis to a magician. It has given rise to other statements from people mocking the 'Creation Story' in the Bible. The narrative in Genesis Chapters 1 and 2 indicates a direct, divine intervention in the creation of the Universe. It is a story about events that really took place 'IN THE BEGINNING'. The Word of God is absolutely trustworthy. The truth stated in Gen. 1:1, "In the beginning God created", is indisputable. The statement also points to the beginning of 'TIME'. The Person or Being who caused the beginning of Universe and Time has obviously to be beyond space and time. Bible presents that Being as God, the Creator. The narrative is also an affirmation concerning the fundamental relation between God and the world, acknowledging our own dependence on God. It is unfortunate if the creative work of the Creator is downgraded as the performance of a magician.

Science is able to give us knowledge and in many cases it can be very precise and accurate. But science cannot give much information about God, the invisible, as it mainly deals with observation. Bible is not a text book of science. Its narratives are not intended to prove or disprove any scientific postulates. We should not make the Bible say that which it does not propose to say, or what the Bible writers have not intended to say on various branches of knowledge.

However, modern science has not yet made faith unacceptable. Science is a body of knowledge obtained by methods based upon observation. The task in science is to understand nature. The Bible writers did not use the language of any science to describe natural

things. They used popular language, the language in which people converse. The statements about nature in the Bible are free of any scientific postulation of theories. Scientists observe the events in God's creation and then attempt to discover the rules as to how these events hang together. God is there all the time holding everything in existence.

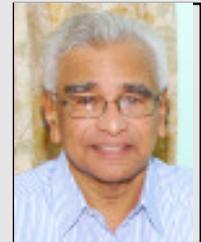
According to Psalm 19, the data we get through scientific exploration of the universe can be considered as the speech of God in nature (vs1-6), and the Bible as the speech of God in the Scriptures (vs7-11). God, the author of both these records is infallible. But man is a fallible

interpreter and therefore, we can go wrong in interpreting both science and the Bible. However, truths are truths and facts are facts even if the interpretation goes wrong!

Scientific pursuits and a belief in God ought not be seen as  
c o n t r a d i c t o r y

approaches to reality. Theology starts with faith in revelation, and is based on personal involvement in living the truth. Science involves active observation of the universe and objectivity. The quest for knowledge and truth is not hindered but guided by the very purpose of God revealed in the Word of God.

We can notice a number of scientific factors that are set within precise parameters to facilitate our life on this planet. The precision seen in the universe is so utterly fantastic and mathematically accurate, that it is just plain silly to think of the origin as an accident or chance. There are over 150 critical parameters like the earth's distance from the sun, sun's mass and size, earth's location in the right part of the galaxy, the tilt of planetary axis which is necessary for seasons, speed of light etc, and a small change in any of these would make life



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impossible. All the seemingly arbitrary and unrelated constants in physics are precisely the values required to have a universe capable of producing and sustaining life. There is no fundamental reason why these values have to be the way they are.

Our universe, solar system and especially our earth were purposely constructed by a powerful intelligence within very narrow scientific parameters to allow human life to flourish. The probability of something physical coming from nothing is zero. Not a single physical state or event known can originate from nothing. General relativity points to the need for a cause that transcends the domains of time,

Some suggest that the universe and everything in it came into existence by chance. But chance has no power to cause anything. Chance is a mathematical abstraction with no real existence. Since it is nothing, it cannot do anything.

space, matter and energy. Some suggest that the universe and everything in it came into existence by chance. But chance has no power to cause anything. Chance is a mathematical abstraction with no real existence. Since it is nothing, it cannot do anything. Moreover, intelligent life has the ability to think and act in a purposeful way. An eternally self-subsistent Being is far more probable than a self-subsisted event emerging from no cause.

Scientists believe that this universe will not last forever and that it has a beginning and an end. Its energy has been slowly diminishing from the time it began and it will come to a final state called 'Thermo dynamic death'. It is observed that if any system is left alone, it naturally moves

from an orderly state to a disorderly state unless there is a perpetual input of energy. Hence, a Creator is also required to sustain all systems in this universe.

The above mentioned parameters and the fine-tuning of the universe point powerfully towards an Intelligent Designer. The integrative complex systems in biological organism and the finely tuned machines of the cellular world also point to such a designer. The information

stored in the DNA or the assembly instructions is invariably the result of a great Mind, not chance or self-organizational process. Theories that rely solely on matter and energy are not going to be able to account for information. In a sense, information is not

something derived from material properties; it transcends matter and energy. Information is the hall mark of the mind.

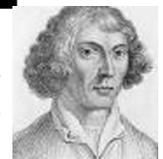
The scientifically revealed Intelligent Designer uniquely and decisively matches the character and the characteristics of the biblically revealed God. Design implies that information has been applied to accomplish a purpose. Not only the universe but all in it are in the plan and purpose of God - that includes each one of us!

*So, it is by no means, descriptions of a magician's performance that we read in the beginning of the Bible, but creative acts of a great big wonderful God who sustains the universe.*

### Famous Scientists Who Believed in God

#### Nicholas Copernicus (1473-1543)

Copernicus was the Polish astronomer who put forward the first mathematically based system of planets going around the sun. Copernicus referred to God in his works and did not see his system as in conflict with the Bible.

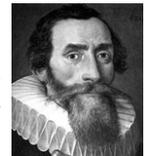


#### Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1627)

Bacon was a philosopher who is known for establishing the scientific method of inquiry based on experimentation and inductive reasoning. Bacon established his goals as being the discovery of truth, service to his country, and service to the church. He rejected atheism as being the result of insufficient depth of philosophy.

#### Johannes Kepler (1571-1630)

Kepler was a brilliant mathematician and astronomer. He did early work on light, and established the laws of planetary motion about the sun. Kepler was an extremely sincere and pious Lutheran, whose works on astronomy contain writings about how space and the heavenly bodies represent the Trinity.



- Continued on page 13

# Worrying About Tomorrow?

*"Do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself.  
Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matthew 6:34)*

Worry means to fret or to feel anxious. When you are worried your spirit is not calm, it is agitated. You are upset inside. After Judas betrayed Jesus, he could not control his anxiety and lost his peace and hanged himself. Peter denied Jesus to a servant girl cursing and swearing because of fear and he cried bitterly when he remembered the words of Jesus that he will deny Him three times before a rooster crows twice.

But Jesus forgave Peter and restored his life. After that, Peter became a mighty warrior for Jesus. He stopped worrying about his life. King Herod killed James and arrested Peter, intending to kill him to please the Jews and bound him with chains between two soldiers. But Peter now was not worried and he could even sleep soundly when in prison. The angel of the Lord appeared, woke him up and led him to freedom (Acts 12).

Or consider Moses. The Lord called him to rescue His people from Egyptian bondage, and Moses made all kinds of excuses to get out of that responsibility. He was worried about how the people might respond to him. But God did not leave him alone to do the job. His mighty hand was with Moses and helped him all the way. The same Moses who was so worried at first actually led the whole nation of Israel out of Egypt in a miraculous way! This is a reminder to us that if God asks us to do a task for Him and if we obey Him, He will take care of us. There are many examples of how God performed miracles in the lives of His people who trusted Him wholeheartedly.

There are mainly three reasons people get worried. Past experience of sufferings, present challenges and unknown future. Jesus' teaching about worry in Matthew 6:25-34 is very relevant for all time. The Life Application Bible gives seven reasons not to worry:

1. The same God who created life in you can be trusted with the details of your life,
2. Worrying about the future hampers your efforts for today,

3. Worrying is more harmful than helpful,
4. God does not ignore those who depend on Him,
5. Worry shows a lack of faith in and understanding of God,
6. There are real challenges God wants us to pursue and worrying keeps us from them and
7. Living one day at a time keeps us from being consumed with worry.

Our worry shows a lack of faith in God. God loves us and is in control. We should not worry; instead, we should trust in God. You will find peace if you concentrate on God and in His goodness. Jesus told the disciples that they should not worry about what to say when they get arrested for preaching the gospel. The Holy Spirit will speak through them. I heard a Pastor telling his congregation that he will stand firm in the word of God even if he gets arrested for breaking the law of the state contrary to the law of the Bible.

Apostle Paul exhorted the Philippians that they should not be anxious (worry) about anything (Phil. 4:6,7). Instead, they should pray more with thanksgiving. Paul's advice is to turn their worries into prayer! We are worried about many things like sickness, finance, future of the children and their safety, war and crimes, etc. Many Christian projects are cancelled because of money worries.

These are the last days and Christians should launch out by faith to spread the gospel to the uttermost part of the world. We know that Christ is the only hope for the hopeless perishing millions in the world. Meanwhile, Satan is using false religions like Islam to entice people either by false hope or by force. Satan is working very hard because he knows that the time is short before Jesus Christ, the King of kings, will appear in the horizon to establish His kingdom. *Do not forget that the victory is ours.*

*Praise the Lord!*



**Jeffreys Samuel**  
M.A.(Comp. Rel.)  
Elder, Church By  
the Side of the  
Road, Seattle,  
USA

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# God's Book for Mankind:

- Part 9B -

## Reliability of the Bible (External Evidences)



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Jesus Christ believed in the historical accuracy of the Old Testament as He made references to so many Old Testament events, places and people

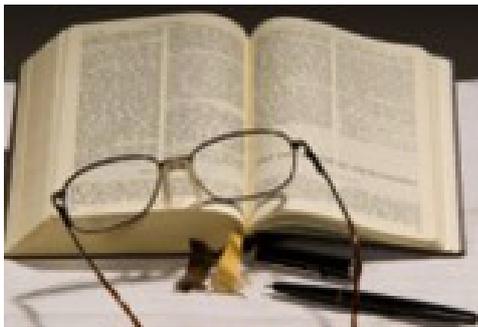
There are plenty of external evidences for the reliability of the Holy Bible. We will consider only a few of them in this article. There are plenty of writings available for those who wish to study further.

### 9) **Archeological Evidence:**

There are so many archeological evidences that have been discovered which prove the trustworthiness or reliability of the Bible. Archeological findings agree with what was recorded in the Bible so long ago. These discoveries confirm that what is written so long ago in the Bible is reliable. The Dead Sea scrolls discovered between 1947 and 1956 in caves along the northwest shore of the Dead Sea in an area known as Qumran has been a blow to skeptics. There are remarkable evidences here that support the reliability of the Bible. So many of the biblical narratives have been confirmed even by non-Christians because of the incredible records of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other archeological discoveries. Archeologist Joseph Free has said in his book, *Archeology and Bible History* published by Scripture Press, that "Archeology has confirmed countless passages of the Bible which had been rejected by critics as unhistorical or contrary to known facts".

### 10) **Historical Accuracy:**

Jesus Christ believed in the historical accuracy of the Old Testament as He made references to so many Old Testament events, places and people as we have seen in the previous article. Publius Cornelius Tacitus was a Roman senator and a historian of the Roman Empire. He wrote "The Annals" which is a history of the Roman Empire, and wrote about Jesus Christ and His followers, the Christians. Pliny the Younger, who was a historian and Roman Governor in Bithynia in Asia Minor, wrote about Christ and Christians who worshipped Him. Flavious Josephus was a



Jewish historian who lived in the first century A. D. The writings of these and many other secular historians are consistent with the writings of the New Testament. Sir William Ramsey was a skeptic when he began to look into the history of the New Testament. After many years of research and study he became a strong

believer of the Bible because he was so convinced of the accuracy of the Bible.

### 11) **Scientific Accuracy:**

Even though the primary purpose of the Bible is not to give instruction in any particular field of science, the Bible has much scientific information than we usually know or hear about. As a matter of fact, much of the scientific information that was written in the Bible was considered wrong by many

scientists of the past. But it proved that the Bible is accurate and correct and that the scientists were in the wrong in many areas in the past. We will look at a few of them here.

It was believed that astronomers can count all the stars in the sky. A very famous astronomer, Claudius Ptolemy, was dogmatic in the second century A.D. that there are only 1056 stars. Later other

astronomers found more stars and then some more and more as time went by. But it is written in the Bible long ago that no man can count all the stars (Gen. 13:16; 15:5. Heb. 11:12) and science finally came to accept this Bible truth.

Scientists used to believe that all stars are the same. But the Bible stated that there are differences between stars (1 Cor. 15:41). Scientists agree with this now.

The common belief for many years was that the earth was flat, but Isaiah wrote by the Holy Spirit about 750 years before the birth of Christ that the earth was globular (Isa. 40:22).

Scientists did not know how the earth stayed in its position, and common people used to believe

The Dead Sea Scrolls discovered between 1947 and 1956 in caves along the northwest shore of the Dead Sea in an area known as Qumran have been a blow to the skeptics!

that the earth sat on a huge turtle or elephant or some other huge animals. Where as, it is written in the Bible that the earth is suspended in space (Job 26:7).

There was a medically approved practice among many countries known as bloodletting, that is, cutting the bodies of sick people so they'd get well by bleeding, thinking that blood was a carrier of sicknesses and diseases, and as a result so many bled to death. Where as the Bible said very clearly that the life of the flesh is in the blood (Levi. 17:11).

The Word of God gives the right foundation for understanding the scientific evidence. The Bible is fully and completely reliable, dependable, and trustworthy in its totality in each and every subject matter that it talks about. If any information in the Bible is not correct regarding physical and temporal matters how can we trust it in spiritual and eternal matters?

### **12) Manuscript or Bibliographical Evidence**

There are thousands more copies of Biblical manuscripts available than there are for any of the ancient writings such as of Plato, Aristotle and Socrates. The Bible has been copied accurately so many times without any major mistakes that

The Bible is fully and completely reliable, dependable, and trustworthy in its totality in each and every subject matter that it talks about.

could cause any conflict or contradictions in the teaching and understanding of the Word of God. Jewish Scribes who had special training to copy the scriptures made these hand-copied manuscripts with great care and respect. There are 10,000 Latin Vulgates manuscripts, over 5,000 New Testament Manuscripts and over 9,000 other early manuscripts.

Copying errors may happen over time. So the advantage of having so many manuscript copies is that any one who wishes to compare them can do so with more copies. Each manuscript is one more witness to the truthfulness of the written record. These hand written copies of the Word of God were found in places such as Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Greece, and Italy without discrepancies. There are some variants that the scholars found in the manuscripts. Most of these variants only have to do with a missing letter or reversing the order of words. None of the doctrines or teachings are affected by the variants. Greek scholar D. A. Carson wrote that, "The purity of the text is of such substantial nature that nothing we believe to be true and nothing we are commanded

to do is in any way jeopardized by the variants."

Archeological and manuscript evidence supporting the Bible makes the Bible the best documented book from the ancient world. Historically verifiable events are accurately recorded in the Bible.

### **13) Church Fathers (Patristic) Quotations:**

There are 86,000 quotations from the Bible in the writings of the early church fathers. We will look at some of them here.

Ignatius of Antioch lived from A. D. 35-107. He was a student of the apostle John. He wrote seven

Hand written copies of the Word of God were found in places such as Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Greece, and Italy without discrepancies!

letters to churches and individuals. He quoted from Mathew, Luke and John, most of the letters of Paul including 2 Timothy, and from Acts, Hebrews, James and I Peter.

Clement of Rome, who also lived in the first century, wrote with so many quotations from the Bible.

Polycarp was a disciple of Apostle John and a bishop of the church in Smyrna. In his letter to the church in Philippi he cited plenty from the Bible.

Justin Martyr who lived in the early part of the second century made so many references to the writings of the apostles and prophets.

Irenaeus also lived in the second century. He responded to the Gnosticism heresy and in doing that quoted plenty from the Bible and showed the unity of the Old and the New Testament as well.

Tertullian did his writings during A. D. 196 – 212. He quoted from most of the New Testament books. It is believed that he gave the name New Testament to the 27 books (Mathew through Revelation).

Clement of Alexandria cited from most of the books of the New Testament. He was a great scholar and quoted from secular writings as well in some of his writings. But he made clear distinction between secular writings and the quotations from the Bible.

Origen, (A. D. 185-254), was a great Bible scholar and regarded the 27 books of the New Testament as the inspired Word of God in his writings.

So any one who comes to the Bible with an open mind and heart has plenty of evidences to accept and acknowledge that the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is fully reliable.

Copying errors may happen over time. So the advantage of having so many manuscript copies is that any one who wishes to compare them can do so with more copies.

Justin Martyr who lived in the early part of the second century made so many references to the writings of the apostles and prophets.

So many of the biblical narratives have been confirmed even by non-Christians because of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other archeological discoveries.

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# *True Spirituality:* **THE DESIRE OF GOD**



**Pastor  
Shibu Joseph**  
Navi Mumbai

Even among the denominations of Christianity, understandings vary. Some stress liturgical exposition, others celibacy and some others give emphasis to noisy worship as the mark of spirituality.

The spirituality is, of course, a general concept to all religions in the world irrespective of linguistic or cultural difference. Every religion or religious institutions around the globe have developed certain norms and practices to maintain their spirituality particularly based on their belief in the deities. This commonness we find because humanity was made by God and we have a spiritual capacity. All human beings

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Many times these rituals exploit the human weakness and the so-called spiritual centers become places of corruption and malpractices.

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constantly search for some kind of spiritual forms and activities. In order to satisfy this quest in the hearts of men, religious institutions are formulating various rituals and duties. But many times these rituals exploit the human weakness and the so-called spiritual centers become places of corruption and malpractices. Even among the denominations of Christianity, understandings vary. Some stress liturgical exposition, others celibacy and some others give emphasis to noisy worship as the mark of spirituality. Amidst these various outlooks we need to discover true spirituality and its meanings from the holy and living scriptures, the Bible.

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#### **WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:**

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When Jesus declares that man shall not live by bread alone (Matt. 4:4), He indicates that man needs some other essentials. We need more than the physical essentials to live on the sphere of the earth. Jesus redefined the

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When Jesus declares that man shall not live by bread alone (Matt. 4:4), He indicates that man needs some other essentials.

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understandings of true spirituality from mere religious practices and placed a new insight into the hearts of men. When He was speaking to Nicodemus, Jesus

emphasized the new life that is renewed and remodeled by the Spirit of God and this alone is capable of entering in to the Kingdom of God (John 3:1-12). The economy of spirituality is therefore centered in the living in the Spirit. The spirituality is not only a need of the earthly life but more essentially a need of the divine kingdom. Being spiritual is being in direct relationship to God through the life in the Spirit and the living Word.

Spirituality may be defined as the way we believe, the way we live and the way we express. The biblical spirituality is more than the confession of certain liturgical statements or doing some lent and festivals. It is based on, first of all, whom we believe, then what we believe. The true spirituality, according to the Bible, is actually connected to the Lord of living things. When God elected the people of Israel, He made it clear that they are of His own people, set apart for Himself (Deut. 7:7,14). Here God wanted to establish a personal relation with His people. In fact this relationship is the foundation

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The biblical spirituality is more than the confession of certain liturgical statements or doing some lent and festivals

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of their spirituality. God made them as His kingdom and treasure and as His inhabitation. They should present all their offerings and other rituals as the result of their relationship with Yahweh, not to create a relationship. Whenever they lost the relationship, God never accepted their sacrifices or festivals (Isa. 1:14,15). Definitely God emphasized the relationship with His people and valued it more than all rituals and duties.

The idea of relationship is not only of the Old Testament. Even the New Testament emphasizes this fact too. Jesus in His conversation with disciples, significantly stressed the need of having a personal relation with Him (John 15) which must be reckoned as the basis of true spirituality. Jesus came to this

world to restore the broken relationship or to reconcile the humanity with God the Father. When the first man did the sin against Creator, what he lost was his spiritual relation with Him. In Jesus Christ we can attain this lost relation by hearing and doing the word He declared. This is what Jesus is now teaching the disciples. Jesus called men to become His disciples not as just worshipers but to make interpersonal relation with Him. This sincere affinity they declare is the cornerstone of their spirituality. Even the worship and adoration are the result of this relationship. Worship without having the relation is merely a lip service.

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Jesus called men to become His disciples not as just worshipers but to make interpersonal relationship with Him.

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“Abide in Christ and Christ abides in them” is the key factor in this matter. This harmonious and mutual relation makes life meaningful and effective. By living in such a unity would transmit the fullness of His life in us.

Abiding in Christ Jesus is the essence of spiritual life. Even our prayers get answered on this basis (John 15:7). The fruit we produce is also the result of dwelling in Him. Bearing fruit is the open proof of our spirituality. A mere belief in the power of Jesus or praising God like a Pharisee is not sufficient to have the expected spirituality. The absolute surrender and commitment to the will and word will certainly make all the difference. Nothing else matters but Christ above all. Obviously Jesus Christ is the nucleus of true spiritual life.

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#### MEANING OF TRUE SPIRITUALITY :

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The above descriptions enable us to find out a few meanings which are outlined as follows:

1. Personal relationship with the Lord is the FOUNDATION of true spirituality.
2. Perfect commitment is the WAY to reach the true spiritual experience.
3. Absolute obedience is the MARK of the spiritual life.
4. Living in the Word is the GROUND of true spiritual life.
5. Fruitfulness is the EXPRESSION of being spiritual.

6. Purity in life is the STANDARD of true spirituality.

7. Undeclared love is the BANNER of spiritual life.

8. Glorifying Christ is the PURPOSE of living in the spirituality.

9. Sharing our resources is the CHARACTER of our spiritual living.

10. Gratefulness is the SIGN of true spiritual life.

11. Transparency in Christian life is the CHALLENGE of true spirituality.

In short, being in true spirituality is not an ordinary matter. One has to give up self desires and personal goals for the sake of the word of life and the Lord of glory. It is easy to become merely religious. Even the believers are today thinking that going to the church and participating in the activities are more than enough to please God. The institutionalization of worship and other programs prompt them to think in this way. No one is serious of spirituality in the way the scripture instructs. The OT prophets especially the eight century prophets like Isaiah, Amos, Hosea and Micah strongly criticized the mere religious attitude of the Jews towards the Yahweh. Today this is what is happening among the Pentecostals. We have more spiritual activities but no spiritual

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Abiding in Christ Jesus is the essence of spiritual life. Even our prayers get answered on this basis (John 15:7). The fruit we produce is also the result of dwelling in Him.

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character. We replaced projects in the place of prayer and storing instead of sharing, greed instead of love and the list goes on. We have lot of conventions but no commitment to what we preach and believe. We have to come back to the Lord of grace with penitent heart and admit our failures. Apostle Peter gives an alarming message, “the end of everything is near, so we be diligent in our prayer and be sober minded” (I Pet. 4:7). The time of salvation is near to us than the hour we first believed. Let us live spiritually according to the Word. Doubtlessly, being in true spiritual life is the desire of our loving Father.

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Being in true spirituality is not an ordinary matter. One has to give up self desires and personal goals for the sake of the word of life and the Lord of glory.

Let us live spiritually according to the Word. Doubtless, being in true spiritual life is the desire of our loving Father.

## ***How does GOD view and define 'TRUE' RELIGION?***

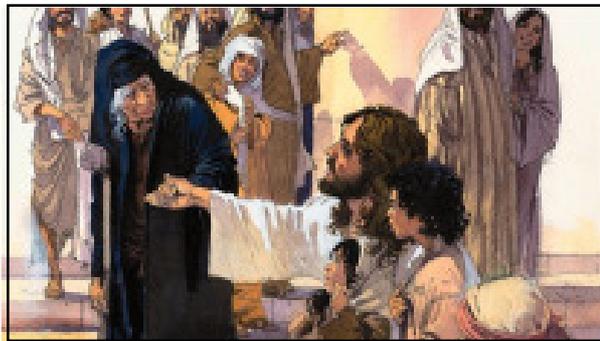


**Dr. Shibu  
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*"Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27)*

The epistle of James is one of the most practical books ever found in the New Testament. In the above verse, Apostle James attempts to define what a true religion is in the eyes of God. Religion here means the external patterns of behavior connected with religious belief. It refers to the outward forms rather than the inward spirit. It means the outer expression of belief in worship and service rather than the doctrines believed. Thus, religion has to do with our worship manifested in the outward through our acts of service!



So, how can we really worship God through our outward acts of worship? True religion as an outpouring of our genuine faith in God is an expression of how we relate to God and others. James stresses concern for widows and orphans as a true measure of obedience that is pleasing to God. We should be aware that Israel was given this responsibility in the Old Testament (Deut. 14:29; Ezek. 22:7). It reflects the concerns of God Himself (Deut. 10:18; Psalms 9:18; 68:5; 146:9).

Before James comes around to defining true religion, he has already rebuked mere listening and not doing anything (vv. 22–25), and then he rebukes mere doing without having our inner lives changed (vv. 26–27). In keeping with his emphasis on genuine faith and its consequent good works, James offers three key aspects of pure religion:

1. Restrain our tongues from speaking evil of others.
2. Show practical concern for those in need.

3. Keep ourselves pure from sin.

What God is looking for is the practical type of godliness which takes a compassionate interest in others and keeps our own life clean, better defined as "acts of grace and a walk of separation". This happens when both practical love and practical holiness are evident in our lives!

We should be aware that orphans and widows were among the most unprotected and needy classes in ancient societies

(see Ezek. 22:7). Taking care of orphans and widows is a duty that lies close to the heart of God, and personal moral purity is an excellent external indicator of godliness. Pure religion does not merely give material goods for the relief of the distressed, it also oversees their care (see Acts 6:1–7; 1 Tim. 5:3–16) as true faith in Christ does not show itself merely in religious observances.

Our new identity in Christ is thus evident in the way we take care of one another - reaching even to the most frail and vulnerable among us - who are most in need of our help. The way God views and defines true religion is when His character is reflected through our practical lives which are exemplified by our pure speech, pure love, and pure character. This is a lofty challenge that should guide us how to live before God and other people!

"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46)

*"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."*

(Matt. 7:21) ■

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The way God views and defines true religion is when His character is reflected through our practical lives

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# Children's

CORNER



## Keep your little light shining !



This story goes back to the time when electricity was not discovered. A man was carrying a candle and climbing the stairs of a lighthouse. On their way up, the candle asked the man, "Where are we going?" The man answered, "We're going to the top of this lighthouse to give signals to the big ships on the ocean".

The candle was shocked and exclaimed "What? How is it possible for me with my little light to give signals to those big ships? I am incapable of doing this".

The man told the candle reassuringly, "Be ready to do your part. If your light is small, let it be. All you have to do is keep burning and leave the rest to me".

'The ships will never be able to see my light', the candle thought in its mind

and kept quiet.

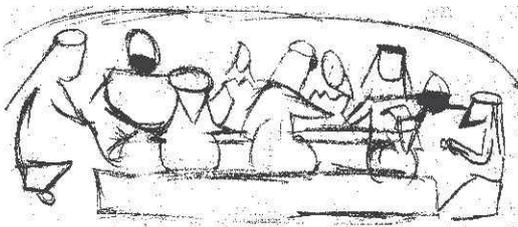
A little later, they entered a room at the top of the lighthouse where a big lamp was sitting. The man lit the lamp with the candle and instantly, the place began to shine so brightly that the ships on the ocean could see its light.

Dear children, you may sometimes feel that you are too small to be useful for God but this story tells us that a small candle was only needed to light up the lighthouse and to show directions to all the ships in the ocean.

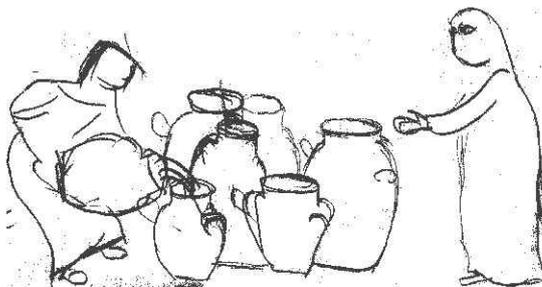
Therefore, though you are small and weak God can use you in amazing ways if you submit yourself in God's hands. Always bear in mind that your life is like a small candle in God's powerful hand. We're hardly able to do any meaningful things if we concentrate on our weakness and limitations. Your abilities and expertise will remain as a small light if you don't put your life in God's hand. On the contrary, even if your light is so small or dim, if you entrust all your life to God, He is able to convert your small light into a big one that brings blessings to many people. Bible says in 1 Peter 5:6: Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time.



**Juby Anoop, England**



## Marriage at Cana



**Angel Thomas**  
Kalamoli, Navi Mumbai.

## MACHINES & PUMP STORE



Please change the Sprinkle valve it gives water to the neighbour's Garden



**Banage P.K.**

## Israelites crossing Red Sea as it on dry land.



**Jeff Sam Scariah**  
Kerala



&

JKS



Pope Francis certifies Big Bang & Evolution to be true!



Suvartha readers may have seen a recent statement of Pope Francis as reported in Times of India: "The theories of evolution and the Big Bang are real and God is not a magician with a magic wand. When we read about Creation in Genesis, we run the risk of imagining God was a magician, with a magic wand able to do everything. But that is not so. The Big Bang, which today we hold to be the origin of the world, does not contradict the intervention of the divine creator but, rather, requires it. Evolution in nature is not inconsistent with the notion of creation, because evolution requires the creation of beings that evolve".

*It is clear that Pope does not believe in the Creation story in Genesis. His assertion that Big Bang and Evolution require a creator sounds contradicting with each other. The scientists who are advocating these theories confess themselves that they do not believe in God and do not want to give any role to a creator in this whole business.*

*The role of an Intelligent Designer in the creation of the universe is discussed in the article by Dr. George Samuel on page 3 of this issue. Some more details on the topic are added below:*

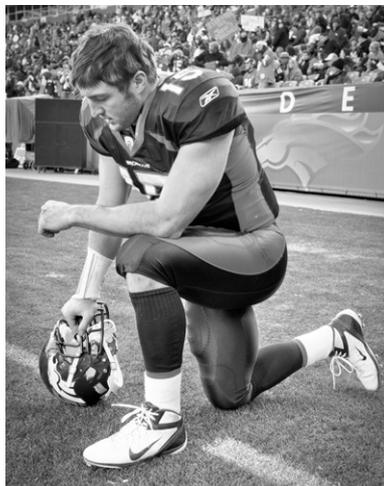
In a new book "Miracles", the author Eric Metaxas says: "Possibly the greatest evidence for the existence of miracles is the fact that we exist. The universe as we

know it requires such a careful calibration of variables as to render its mere existence a miracle in itself. For instance, if the earth were slightly larger, it would of course have slightly more gravity. As a result, methane and ammonia gas, which have molecular weights of sixteen and seventeen respectively, would remain close to the surface of the earth. Since we can't breathe methane or ammonia because of their toxicity, we would die. If Earth were slightly smaller, water vapor would not stay close to the planet's surface, but would instead dissipate into the atmosphere. Obviously, without water we couldn't exist. What's true of Earth is true of the Universe as a whole. What physicists call the four fundamental forces - gravity, electromagnetism and the strong and weak nuclear forces - are so finely tuned that if any of them were in the slightest degree different, our universe would not exist. What's more, each of these crucially precise values was established once and for all within one millionth of a second after the Big Bang, in other words, immediately".

*Such precision cannot happen by chance and Pope's certificate is certainly invalid.*

"The Tebow CURE Hospital" in the Philippines

Tim Tebow is on a project of building a hospital (The Tebow CURE Hospital)



in Philippines which will be opened in 2015. Tim said in a statement, "I was born in the Philippines while my parents served as missionaries, and I have always had a great love and passion for the Filipino people. It is so exciting to be able to provide healing and care for these incredibly deserving children halfway around the world". 'Christian Today' reports that the 30 bed hospital specializes in children's orthopedic procedures such as clubfoot, bowed legs and cleft palate, and will serve families that cannot afford the treatments and surgeries.

*Tim Tebow (6'-3") became famous for his prayer pose (see the photo above) on football fields and is now a TV personality covering football (US NFL) games. He was a successful football quarter back in NFL teams. He is a very committed Christian and he used to fall on his knees on the football fields and pray before the start of any game. (A report on him was published in these columns a few months ago). Such public display of faith is usually frowned upon nowadays in the US. He was born in Philippines when his parents were in that country as missionaries. His efforts to use his money for Christian charitable work is highly commendable.*

President Obama invents a Bible verse!

Obama delivered a speech on immigration where he quoted the Bible: "The good book says don't throw stones at glass houses, or make sure we're looking at the log in our eye before we are pointing out the mote in other folks eyes". While reporting the speech, The Washington Post remarks that the expression "they that live in glass houses should not throw stones" is not a Bible verse, but a popular proverb. The second part is based on Matthew 7:1-3: "Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?"

Also in the speech, Obama compared illegal immigrants to the Christmas story saying, "If we're serious

about the Christmas season, now is the time to reflect on those who are strangers in our midst and remember what it was like to be a stranger". This statement was criticized by some because Mary and Joseph were travelling to Joseph's native land when there was no room at the inn; they were not illegal immigrants. Also, the reason Mary and Joseph travelled to Bethlehem was to follow the law and return to Joseph's homeland for a census.

*This shows how Bible verses and stories can be twisted and quoted out of context to argue a point! Or is it like the devil quoting the Scriptures!!*

#### Billy Graham's marathon crusade in 1949

Billy Graham celebrated his 96th birthday in November (Born: Nov. 7, 1918). In his autobiography, "Just As I Am", Billy Graham calls that crusade conducted in a rented circus tent in Los Angeles, California in 1949 as 'watershed' of his life. It changed his life and the future course of American evangelism. Historian Grant Wacker says in his book, "America's Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation": "It was this eight weeks long, sin-slaying marathon in Los Angeles where the story of Billy Graham as an icon begins". Every element of what became the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's



crusade juggernaut came together for the first time in this early campaign. Graham knitted a new creation - the prototype evangelistic crusade as a religious, social and political force. He put together his contacts from his early preaching days with Youth for Christ, the powerful Christian Businessmen's Committee of Los Angeles, hundreds of local pastors, heavy advertisement, celebrity power and personal magnetism. With a commanding voice, the tall and handsome evangelist seemed to connect eye to eye, ear to ear with every person in the tent. By 2005, when Graham retired from the trail of evangelizing, it became impossible to count the celebrities who found faith through him. With a forceful anticommunist voice, he was becoming

an evangelist with a political profile.

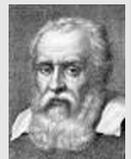
The meetings ran every night from September 25 to November 20 (1949). Around 6,000 people committed their lives to Christ. Graham spoke to countless civic, school, and business groups, making three to four appearances a day. He gave dozens of interviews. He even made friends with Hollywood celebrities such as Cecil B. DeMille, Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn. By the time the Los Angeles campaign ended, Graham was rocketing to national and international acclaim.

*In every meeting, Billy Graham invited people to walk towards the dais: "God has spoken to you, You come on". Over the next six decades, hundreds of thousands heard those words and did the same.*

### Famous Scientists Who Believed in God (Continuation from page 4)

#### Galileo Galilei (1564-1642)

Galileo is often remembered for his conflict with the Roman Catholic Church. His controversial work on the solar system was published in 1633. Galileo expressly said that the Bible cannot err, and saw his system as an alternate interpretation of the biblical texts.



#### Isaac Newton (1642-1727)

In optics, mechanics, and mathematics, Newton was a figure of undisputed genius and innovation. He was devoutly religious. He did a considerable work on biblical numerology. In his system of physics, God was essential to the nature and absoluteness of space. In Principia he stated, "The most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being."

#### Robert Boyle (1791-1867)

One of the founders and key early members of the Royal Society, Boyle gave his name to "Boyle's Law" for gases. As a devout Protestant, Boyle took a special interest in promoting the Christian religion abroad, giving money to translate and publish the New Testament into Irish and Turkish. In 1690 he developed his theological views in The Christian Virtuoso, which he wrote to show that the study of nature was a central religious duty.



#### Albert Einstein (1879-1955)



Einstein is probably the best known and most highly revered scientist of the twentieth century, and is associated with major revolutions in our thinking about time, gravity, and the conversion of matter to energy. Although never coming to belief in a personal God, he recognized the impossibility of a non-created universe. A famous saying of his was "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."