

From the Editor's Desk



Entering the Silver Jubilee Year of "Suartha" Magazine

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12)

The year 2016 is the **Silver Jubilee Year** of the Magazine.

We, in the 'Suartha' family, joyfully thank God for enabling us to publish the Magazine till now against many odds.

'Thus far the Lord has helped us'

"Ebenezer"

IPC Maharashtra State (formerly 'Region') organized a Silver Jubilee Convention and published a Silver Jubilee Souvenir in November 2015 to celebrate completion of 25 years. "Suartha" Magazine began publication as the official organ of the 'Region' soon after its formation. The year 2016 is the Silver Jubilee Year of the Magazine. We, in the 'Suartha' family, joyfully thank God for enabling us to publish the Magazine till now against many odds. As we look back, we recall the many hurdles that we crossed. Just as Prophet Samuel erected a stone with a grateful heart and called it 'Ebenezer' and said: *'Thus far the Lord has helped us'*, we also have to erect a few 'Ebenezer' stones at various stages of this ministry and reiterate again and again: *'Thus far the Lord has helped us'*. We are also thankful to our friends and well wishers who pray for this ministry and give us financial help. We are especially thankful to the Board of Executives who are wholeheartedly doing their best to ensure the magazine's uninterrupted publication.

New Year reflections:

As we enter the new year, this is the time to look back to the past year and to look ahead to the coming year. There is a saying: *"Only one life, 'twill soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last"*. Keeping that criterion in mind, it is good to consider how much of our time was spent for Christ. In the light of eternity, all other achievements are insignificant and do not really matter. Jesus is our great example of how to spend our time productively for God's purposes. In three short years, He launched a ministry with a bunch of unlikely men that changed history.

How did Jesus do it? Some of His guiding principles are evident in John's account of the 'Raising of Lazarus from the dead' (John 11). They

are listed below without elaborating them:

1. He was in constant communion with His Father and in total submission to His will.

2. He made decisions based on what would glorify God (John 11:4).

3. He made decisions based on helping others come to faith and grow in faith (John 11:15, 25-26, 42, 45).

If we make sure that our actions are guided by these principles, they will certainly count for eternity. This is both an initial decision and an ongoing commitment. Therefore, let us resolve for the new year to prayerfully establish and maintain the right priorities, seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness, love God and love and build up others in faith.

The old year is behind us. Its record is made and cannot be changed. Doubtless there is much in it we would like to change, some things we wish we had done different, some things left undone, some regrets and some good too.

We have a new year before us. God is the God of new beginnings. Let us resolve to do better, and do our best for the Lord in this new year. Thank God for His love in giving us another chance.

A Prayer for 2016:

"I do not pray for happiness or any earthly thing, I do not ask to understand the way you lead me;

But this I ask - teach me to do the thing that pleases You.

*I want to know Your guiding voice,
To walk with you each day.*

*Heavenly Father, Make me swift to hear
and ready to obey;*

And thus the year I now begin

A happy year will be,

*If I am seeking just to do the thing
that pleases You".*

- Selected



**Johnson
K. Samuel**

*We, the "Suartha Family", pray to Almighty God
to grant all our readers
Abundant Blessings in the New Year 2016*

Christian Behaviour: *A Reflection of Faith*

"We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:9,10)

Pentecostal churches seldom teach and preach about the subject, 'Christian Behavior'. Often we emphasize only the spirituality simply based on praise and worship and noisy atmosphere on Sundays. Very conveniently we forget to stress the need of maintaining a pattern of living. In fact, it is the demerit of Pentecostal churches. Today we are being questioned by others not because of the lack of truthfulness of the teachings or the message but because of the failure in the way we live before the people. If we make a survey today, 95% of the churches preach about the material blessings and comforts of life rather than the character formation. We talk about the faith but without the works. We are twisting the faith to gain membership and present Jesus Christ as someone like a lottery owner. Now a days values are getting degraded and morality is at the verge of deterioration. Hypocrisy is rampant and many are after position and popularity. Nobody really takes care the vineyard of God. Nobody is concerned about the character and behavior. Everyone is looking for name and fame and ignoring the great values and exemplary lives of the saints in the Bible. This really presents a dull picture of living Christianity.

In this context, what Apostle Paul says in his prayer for the church at Colosse is outstanding. Here Paul makes a supplication: *".....WE PRAY THIS IN ORDER THAT YOU MAY LIVE A LIFE WORTHY OF THE LORD AND MAY PLEASE HIM IN EVERY WAY" (Col. 1:10)*. Obviously this verse denotes the necessity of knowing the urgency of living in a worthy manner. In other words, people of God should be well aware about the way we walk or the manner we need to show ourselves through our life. We have to behave worthily which must be in accordance with the worthiness of our Lord. Christian life is not merely a life of believing in Christ alone but it is a commitment we make to live according to what we believe. In order to behave in the biblical manner, one has to be filled with the

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spiritual wisdom. Some people feel that having the fullness of the knowledge is for self esteem and elite position. But the Spirit is giving this to us to behave properly in the church and in the world. Definitely behavior is the reflection of the faith we have in the Lord. The true behavior will show who we are and what we are. Truly, our behavior is based on where we connect our hearts. If we connect our hearts to Jesus, doubtlessly our behavior will be according to the knowledge of His will and we will be able to reflect the mind of Christ.

Here what we must perceive is about our deep and intimate relation with our Lord Jesus. No one is otherwise able to improve the Christian behavior the way the scripture advises. It is vital that Christ's followers should make - not merely converts - but disciples, men and women of mature character and sound judgment. Today there are many converts in Christendom but less followers or disciples. This situation really makes Christianity a mockery among the people. They neglect to show the spiritual behavior in par with the living Word but rather simply do some religious activities. Many unfortunately become the mere Sunday Christians. Their only spirituality is limited to going to church on Sundays, involving in worship, offering, listening to sermons half-heartedly, gradually failing to apply the message in the personal life and eventually becoming ineffective in life and behavior.

In fact, it is always good to look unto Jesus for our behavioral pattern. Apostle Peter rightly said that, "Christ is leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps" (1 Pet. 1:21b). Jesus has set an example in how to behave in adverse situations (1 Pet. 2:22-24). When He was questioned and faced false

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Pastor Shibu Joseph
Navi Mumbai

If we make a survey today, 95% of the churches preach about the material blessings and comforts of life rather than the character formation. We talk about the faith but without the works.

The Christian behaviour can be categorized into three, namely, spiritual, moral and social. We have been called to represent our Saviour to the world. St. Paul has put it in the right way telling that we are the letters of Christ written and read and known by all

Christianity today need to pay more attention to the teachings Jesus given in the renowned Sermon on the Mount. It is not wrong to think that no other part of the Bible is equal to the Sermon on the Mount in the matter of formation of Christian character.

allegations He kept a divine silence and never made any hint of retaliation in words or actions. Not giving any words of threatening, He suffered everything. Jesus showed an untroubled heart and untainted character before His accusers. He committed everything to His Father. Is it not challenging us today? Is it not putting us in shameful situation today? Now a days, we run to police stations and then to courts after courts not only against outsiders but even against our own fellow beings without any sort of conscience problem. Then surprisingly come to the stage and preach faith, love, unity, cross, suffering etc.!! We come to the church and say a traditional testimony and even give holy kiss! Undoubtedly, Jesus is the example of examples in the life and behavior. He revealed the mind of God. We the followers should make sure that we will reveal the mind of Christ. He does not need mere converts but rather more followers or true disciples.

The Christian behaviour can be categorized into three, namely, spiritual, moral and social. We have been called to represent our Saviour to the world. St. Paul has put it in the right way telling that we are the letters of Christ written and read and known by all (2 Cor. 3:2).

The spiritual behavior is the presentation of ourselves before the splendid presence of the Almighty. The pride, self confidence and ignorance of God's will, are the major stumbling blocks in pleasing God. Our spiritual behavior is not counted on the external appearance but rather considered on the attitude we

show before Him. If we are despising the merit of the Word by doing contrary to it, our behavior will be unspiritual and unacceptable to God. In the parable of tax collector and Pharisee, Jesus emphasized this truth (Luke.18:9-14). The self confidence and pride of Pharisee were on a high altitude as if he alone was the saint in Jerusalem!. Here we can certainly find out the spiritual behavior of this arrogant man. God did not justify him after all!! There are many such like-minded people among us who think that they are very spiritual than all. However they live arrogantly and not able to subject themselves to any one. They may highlight themselves without any humility in life. They pray loudly but no love in words. They are slow in hearing but swift in talking. They judge every one but never judge themselves. They exhort the church but never take time to exhort themselves. Today many pulpit preachers become culprits in spiritual matters. We are losing the Christian behavior slowly.

Spirituality is the foundation of moral and social behavior for us, Christians. because they go hand – in - hand . One can be morally and socially good

according to the worldly concept without any spirituality. There are many atheists living with considerably good behavior. This means good moral behavior does not necessarily need to be spiritual. However, a true spiritual man cannot be morally bad and socially evil, for biblical spirituality is not only demanding just worship alone but also strong morality and healthy social behavior. This is a forgotten matter today. Every one is sticking simply on so- called spiritual expressions and emotional revival rather than ethical character of the members. Today, most of the things take place mechanically and people live on a kind of artificial satisfaction.

Good behavior is like a light to others to know about the difference in our life. Light shines in darkness. In the world of darkness it is the responsibility of Christians to maintain good and divine behavior like a light, so that people will see the Christ likeness through our life. Precisely, our behavior is evaluated through our works. Our action is more powerful than our words. Therefore our faith and works should go hand – in - hand. In order to maintain the good behavior we need to focus willfully in the living Word and deeply

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understand the message. A mere peripheral spiritual life is not sufficient in this matter. One has to dig deep to lay the foundation. The shallow foundation may help to an extent, until the big storm hits. Complete obedience and commitment to the scripture will surely help to maintain good Christian behavior through which we can exhibit

the character of our Lord.

Christianity today need to pay more attention to the teachings Jesus given in the renowned Sermon on the Mount. It is not wrong to think that no other part of the Bible is equal to the Sermon on the Mount in the matter of formation of Christian character. The clarity and value of the Sermon are doubtlessly incredible. Jesus points out various realms of human life in it and how to behave and maintain the horizontal and vertical relationship. In every spiritual practice and relationship as Christians we need to look for the approval and delight of our Almighty. Our Father in heaven has to be pleased in us. He not only looks at the loud voice but also the lovely behavior of our life. Our behavior should be able to justify what we believe. Faith and behavior are not two parallel ways but synoptically connected with each other. We have not many things to show but more things to live on. We are the partakers of the divine character. Hence, be sincere in faith and be faithful in life and be honest in the actions and be transparent in our attitude and be holy in our relationships. Our Redeemer is coming soon. ■

CONFESSION & PRAYER

will result in Healing & Deliverance

Meditations from
"James" - 6

"Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." (James 5:16)

As James brings his epistle to a conclusion, he turns his attention to believers in a church setting who are suffering (v. 13), sick (vv. 14-18) and backslidden (vv. 19-20). To effectively deal with sickness among believers, James proposes two things: the confession of faults to one another and praying for one another.



Confession of faults to one another is necessary if there is to be healing since many sicknesses originate as a result of sin. This is evident from what Jehovah God had spoken to the Old Testament Israelites: "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you" (Exo. 15:26).

Our prayer of faith cannot operate as long as sins are not confessed: "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy" (Prov. 28:13). When confession is made, definite sins should be mentioned: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Confession of faults is necessary, especially to those against whom the sins and injustice have been committed. If one sins against an individual, confession should be made to that individual. When there is trouble between individuals, they should get together and ask for pardon, and do all in their power to make things right (restitution). This was what our Lord Jesus had spoken: "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matt. 5:23, 24). This is especially true when one partakes of the Lord's Table as our unconfessed sins can bring sickness and sometimes even death (1 Cor. 11:27-32).

We should not only confess our sins to one another, but we should pray for one another as well. Instead of holding grudges and allowing resentments to build up, we should maintain ourselves in fellowship with others through prayer.

We see that God restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends and as much as he had before (Job 42:10). However, as per James, in order for our prayers to be effective and powerful, we should meet the following five conditions:

1. We should become righteous before God. This happens when we repent, confess, turn away from our sins, and live righteously. We should not allow sin to cloud our conversation with God as God will not hear us when sin lurks in our hearts (Ps. 66:18).

2. We should pray fervently. For our prayers to be heard and answered, we should pray with passion, sincerity, diligence and discipline.

3. We should pray effectively. For our prayer to be effective, we should expect results as we pray.

4. We should pray specifically. Our prayers should be specific and to the point. This was how Elijah prayed - specifically, first for a drought then for rain.

5. We should pray based on God's Word. We are required to pray in accordance with God's will (1 John 5:14), just like Elijah prayed based on God's directive in Deut. 28:12, 24.

Confession and prayer will result in healing and deliverance! Effective prayer is characterized by the earnestness, fervency, and energy exhibited by a righteous man/woman in Christ. Prayer is powerful when we have faith, ask earnestly and boldly as we persevere and surrender to God's perfect will. Powerful results can happen from even a short time of prayer, as we can see from the prayer examples of Elijah (1 Kings 18:36-37) and our Lord Jesus Christ (John 11:41-42). God longs to meet with us and show His power in our lives. Prayer is really a child's helpless cry to the father's attentive ears. When we are helpless and cry out to our heavenly Father, He will hear and answer us speedily!

So, let's join with King David and pray this prayer today: "I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You in a time when You may be found." (Ps. 32:5-6)



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Prayer is powerful when we have faith, ask earnestly and boldly as we persevere and surrender to God's perfect will.

God's Book for Mankind:

- Part 14 -

'General Over View' Study Method



Dr. C.P. Varghese

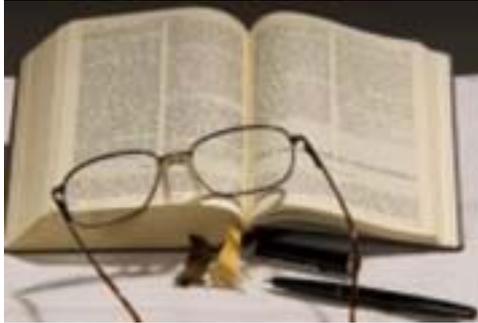
is the Founder & President of *Peniel Bible Seminary*, Peniel Children's Home & Peniel Academy, Keezhillam, Kerala.

It is very important that every child of God gets a general overview of the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation. If you read four chapters of the Bible every day you will be able to read the entire Bible in less than one year. Of course reading through Genesis, Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy is almost like reading history or biography.

Leviticus goes into details about the sacrifices and ceremonies and related religious rituals God required of the children of Israel. Keep in mind that these are shadows of things to come in the New Testament and the meaning and fulfillment are found in the New Testament. Jesus is our high priest and He is the final sacrifice for all sins of all mankind. Every one who receives Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is a priest and there are several spiritual sacrifices that we should offer to the Lord (1 Peter 2:5&9).

Reading through the historical books from the book of Joshua and many of the books of prophecy has history or narrative that is not difficult to read. Yes, there are some prophecies that are difficult to understand, but during this overview study method it is not our intention to understand it.

Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:11 that the histories we read in the Old Testament happened to them as examples and that it is written for our learning and instruction. If you read an average of five Psalms a day (not when you read Psalm 119) you can finish the book of



Psalms in one month. Similarly if you read one chapter of the book of Proverbs daily you can finish it in one month. If you have a Study Bible and if you read the notes at the beginning of each book it gives an over view of that book as well.

You can read through the first four books of the New Testament known as Gospels which gives us glimpses into the life and ministry of Jesus. You can read through the book of the Acts of the Apostles which is the history of the beginning and expansion of the church at the early part of the first century. The book of Romans through the book of Jude are letters written by the Apostles which has wonderful teachings of doctrines and advise for practical Christian living.

When reading the book of Revelation, which is the last book of the Bible, keep in mind that most of it is prophecy which will be fulfilled in the future. Be sure to give close attention to the description of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ as Apostle John saw while he was in the Isle of Patmos as seen in Rev

1:11-16. We read in chapter two and three the seven letters from the Lord to the seven churches. Then as we read of the eternal punishment and the horrible destiny that awaits those who have not received the Lord, each believer should dedicate to do all he or she can to reach those who are lost in sin. Then we see the glorious plan of the Lord for those who love Him as we come to the last chapters of the book of Revelation. What a wonderful book our wonderful Lord has given to us! Praise be to His glorious name!

The histories we read in the Old Testament happened to them as examples and that it is written for our learning and instruction.

Be sure to give close attention to the description of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ as Apostle John saw while he was in the Isle of Patmos

Rising up to the challenge!

*"The whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's"
(1 Samuel 17:46,47)*

We often say we have so many challenges in our life - be it spiritual, official, familial or social. But dear believers, they are not insurmountable for the one who believes in the blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let us consider Othniel who stood up for the challenge of seizing the adversary's camp. Once he did it, he also received the promised gift in the form of Aksah (Judges 1:12-13).

David's confrontation with Goliath is another instance to be noted (1 Samuel 17:20-51). Goliath represented the might of Philistines - which signify a big chunk of difficulties and a real challenge. In verse 34, when Saul was concerned about David's insignificant appearance and strength, David boldly answered that he could tear apart a lion and a bear with his bare hands without any big weapons when he was tending his father's flock. He dared and he succeeded at that time. David's readiness to take up the new challenge banked upon three aspects:

** His total trust in the Lord Almighty*

** His wisdom to understand that the war is not of Saul - the battle is of the Lord.*

** His experience in taking up day to day small challenges ("lions and bears") and his confidence to take up the big challenge in the form of "Goliath"*

This is the classic example of training ourselves for the battle.

When we face difficulties in life, we tend to take them as 'Goliaths'. Even if they are minor discomforts or



Blessy Babu, U.K.

suffering, we term them as 'Goliaths' with a big hue and cry. Our bodily incapacities may be the 'Goliaths' of our life. Our limited finances, situations, circumstances, our painful relationships, sometimes even our own people can become like 'Goliaths' of our life. But friends, these are just day to day challenges of our life. These are just 'lions or bears'. Once we succeed in facing these day to day challenges of our lives, we will be able to tackle 'real challenges' or 'Goliaths' when they arise.

Now how do we train ourselves?

Do we know we also have a Counsellor who gives that "PUSH" in our lives? The Holy Spirit gives us that "PUSH". The Holy Spirit living with us all the time declares, "Nothing is Impossible".

Before dealing with that question, let us take an example from a real incident.

Remember the most anticipated historic fights of "Boxing Heavyweights Championship" between Mohammad Ali and Sonny Liston? For six rounds,

Liston dominated aggressively on Ali leaving him no room for any hope. Liston looked unbeatable at that point making Ali to give up. But the trainer, who invested time on Ali, knew his strengths and grabbed him after the sixth round, talked to him and boosted his confidence. What happened eventually was that Ali believed his trainer and more than that he believed in himself. With great confidence, he overpowered the unbeatable Liston and won the championship.

The trainer might have whispered into Ali's ears about his past victories and gave him the "PUSH" to rise up to the present challenge giving him the confidence that he could make it.

Do we know we also have a Counsellor who gives that "PUSH" in our lives? The Holy Spirit gives us that "PUSH". The Holy Spirit living with us all the time declares, "Nothing is Impossible".

When we rise up to the challenge, three things happen...

** We grow*

** We learn*

** We become stronger*

A true believer should think and affirm that we are not alone in this world. There is one sovereign God who created us, who cared for us so much that He gave us His one and only Son to die. This was the great love and the finished work at the cross.

The work which He opened for us at the cross endures till the end days what the Eschatology speaks about. We are in this world to be His ambassadors and to declare His name and His kingdom to the world. "The

fields are ripe for the harvest but workers are few!"

This unfinished work for us is to be the worker to proclaim His word so that whole world is saved.

This is the "Real Challenge", the "Goliath". And we can take this up only after overcoming our day to day challenges. For that we first need to come out of our own cocoon.

There are some challenges beyond human capabilities. But we also should remember that God gives the grace and power to make it happen. What is needed is to just be ready to take the plunge. Show up the audacity to take the challenge - because the one whom GOD ORDAINS, HE SUSTAINS!!!

Noah rose up to the challenge when he was all alone. Abraham took the challenge of going to an unknown place, Daniel rose up to the challenge

Great things like healing the sick and establishing churches became the norm of the day for Paul. Why? Because in His name all "supernatural" deeds become "ordinary" and the "ordinary" man becomes "supernatural".

of sustaining his holiness without maligning himself and the list goes on. No one did it in one attempt. They actually did practice it daily!

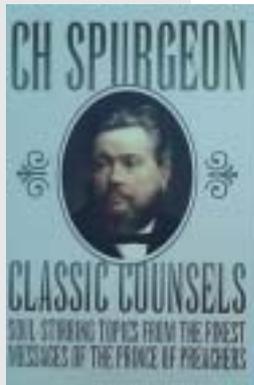
David conquered the challenge and he received the promised gifts which were: riches, royalties and tax exemption.

Paul says "I can do all things through Christ". Great things like healing the sick and establishing churches became the norm of the day for him. Why? Because in His name all "supernatural" deeds become "ordinary" and the "ordinary" man becomes "supernatural".

Let us believe that and run the race in a way that makes us win (1 Corinthians 9:24). As Paul endeavoured to do in his life time, let us also "take up the challenge, pressing towards the goal to receive the prize" (Philippians 3:14). Let us deal with the roaring 'lions and bears' everyday so that we are up and ready for taking on the "Goliath".

Let us be disciples, "ordained and sustained"!!!!

Books Books Books



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These choice messages cover aspects of personal spiritual experience with Christian responsibilities in Spurgeon's distinctively compelling and uplifting style. These edited messages with modernized punctuation cover various soul-stirring topics like obtaining certain assurance, encouraging outsiders, relief for a downcast believer, the Christian and places of entertainment & how converts are sustained and many more poignant truths.

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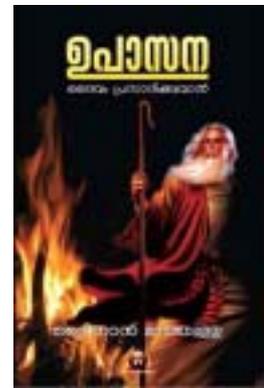


"Sunlight for Cloudy Days"

These chosen messages drawn mainly from prayer meeting addresses with some from Sunday sermons given at the Metropolitan Tabernacle include various subjects like how humility leads to assurance, salvation for those who die in infancy, the purpose of pain & knowing the special love of God. These show us that though we have had our cloudy days, the sun has never set until we have had our glimpses of sunlight from heaven.

Price: Rs. 125/-

Author:
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Joshua and Caleb: *Heroes of Faith*

“So Hebron belonged to Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite ever since, because he followed the Lord, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly” (Joshua 14:14).

Joshua and Caleb - two very familiar people from the Bible. Most of us are also familiar with the incident where they along with ten others went on a tactical assignment to spy the land of Canaan. The interesting part of the story is the report that they gave to Israel after their special assignment. Here we see two different reactions about the same situation (Numbers 13:30-32). Joshua and Caleb were certain that the Israelites could take over the land. But their ten companions disagreed and even spread the bad report to all Israel. On seeing the situation created by their friends, Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes (Numbers 14:6-9). Tearing of clothes was customary to show sadness or despair. Joshua and Caleb were distressed at the people's refusal to enter the land of Canaan. These verses also indicate the secret to their confidence. It was their complete trust in God or keeping their eyes focused on God's promises. Joshua and Caleb were pleading with the people: "Do not rebel against the Lord". They also said, "if the Lord is pleased with us, He will lead us into the land". Joshua and Caleb were obedient to whatever God had planned for them. They knew that they should not rebel against the Lord even though they did not know which way exactly the Lord wanted them to go. But they wanted to do what is pleasing to God. And they knew if the Lord is pleased with them, He will take them to the promised land victoriously. They were willing to move in whichever direction God wanted them to move. Not only were they putting their faith



Brian Ninan, Houston

into practice, they were also trying to encourage others around them to put their trust in God. In our lives also, there might be situations in which those around us might not put their trust in God. But God wants us to put our complete-trust in Him. This will happen only if we make a deliberate commitment to read the Bible regularly, pray and meditate on the verses we read and then try to put them into practice.

Joshua and Caleb knew that they should not rebel against the Lord even though they did not know which way exactly the Lord wanted them to go. But they wanted to do what is pleasing to God.

Later, Moses hands over the leadership role to Joshua before the Israelites crossing River Jordan. At that time, Moses reminds Joshua to be strong and courageous because the Lord will go before him and will be with him, never leaving him (Deuteronomy 31:7-8). It is the same promise that Joshua held on earlier, when he spied the land. After the death of Moses, the Lord Himself says to Joshua "Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right

or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go" (Joshua 1:7). We also have to keep our eye focused on God's promises - promises for us that are in the Bible, promises for us coming through servants of God or any promises that God gives us personally.

Caleb was forty years old when he went to spy Canaan with Joshua. When Israel entered Canaan, he became 85 years old. Then he reminded Joshua about what Moses had told him. Caleb takes a stand for the Lord - he is relying on God's helping hand to defeat the giants living on the land he would like to take over (Joshua 14:9,12) "So Hebron belonged to Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite ever since, because he followed the Lord, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly" (Joshua 14:14). The secret to being victorious in our lives is to completely trust the Lord. We have to keep our eyes focused on God's promises.

Both Joshua and Caleb stood for the Lord when they were young and God sustained them through the years. When they were old, they still kept their faith and encouraged those around them to put their trust in the Lord. Joshua says, "choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

There might be times when putting complete trust in the Lord might be hard. But lives of Joshua and Caleb are great examples of not surrendering to the circumstances around. Let us trust in the Lord completely and keep our eye focused on God's promises.

Children's

CORNER



EYES ON JESUS!



Luke had recently joined the Scouts marching troop. He was quite anxious to prove himself as a good marcher. His first task was to learn to march.

The troop captain explained that the key to marching is to stay focused and to listen constantly to the captain's commands. They were told not to look at anybody or anything around them because they could get distracted very easily. Luke was confident that he would not get distracted by anybody or anything. He would keep his eyes focused above the horizon and listen to his captain's commands.

The first time Luke had an opportunity to march, he proudly lifted up his knees nearly to his chest with every step in order to look like a good marcher. He wanted to please the captain. The captain noticed Luke's marching style and shook his head. He gently told Luke that he did not have to lift his knees up so much but to

place one step in front of the other in harmony with the captain's commands. Luke's desire to show off distracted him from true marching. Luke promised to change his style. Luke tried hard to keep his eyes above the horizon and listen to his captain's commands. His eyes often wandered, but he tried his best.

Soon Luke started criticizing his fellow marchers with comments like "march slower", "swing more", "loosen your arms". One morning, Luke was completely focused on his fellow marchers that he did not hear his captain's instruction to halt. Luke walked several paces in front of the rest of the troop and finally

realized that the rest of his troop had halted several paces behind him. Luke heard his captain's command to fall back in line and to keep his eyes and ears for himself and that the captain will take care of others if there is a need.

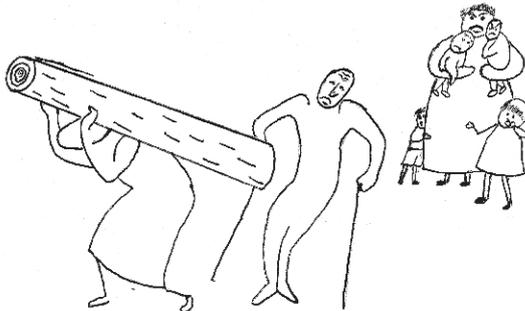
Luke realized that staying focused is not easy. To stay focused, one must put conscious effort for the entire time. Distractions can come in any form.

Dear children, as Christians, we have to live a life focused on Jesus. Though many distractions come our way, we have to keep "looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2-ESV). "Let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). Let us run our Christian race focusing on Jesus and His instructions from His Word.



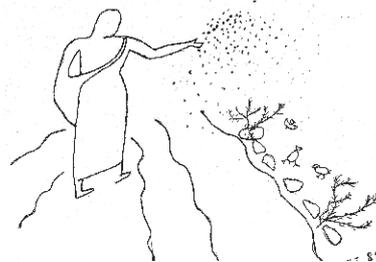
Beena Aunty

Jesus is our best carrier of our heavy loads



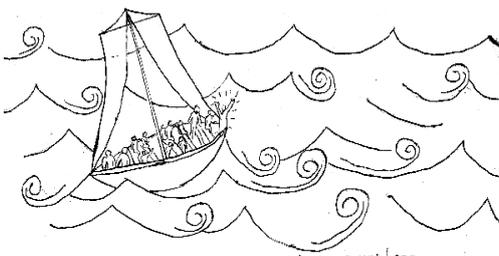
Sheba Mary Roymon
Bahrain

There was a man who went out to sow the seed



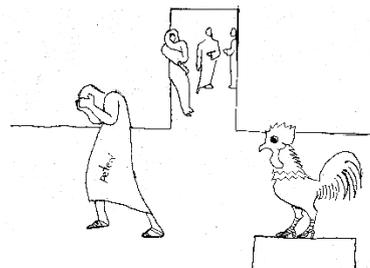
Jeff Sam Scariah
Kerala

Pray to God when you are in great distress



Pheba Susan Sam
Kerala

Peter denies Jesus three times before the cock crows two times



Rufos Roymon
Bahrain



'Ten commandments' monument removed!

A two-ton granite monument commemorating the Ten Commandments installed in the



Oklahoma Capitol grounds (USA) was stealthily removed at night and transported to a private place for storage. The Capitol Preservation Commission voted 7-1 to remove the display from public property. The dramatic conclusion came after the Oklahoma Supreme Court's decision earlier that the display violates a state constitutional prohibition on the use of public property to support "any sect, church, denomination or system of religion". The monument was removed under the cover of darkness to keep protesters away.

One need not be surprised by such an incident because such things have become quite normal in USA!

Prayer brings unexpected blessing!

A lady ordered breakfast at a restaurant in Oklahoma, USA for herself and her two young sons. They bowed their heads and prayed before eating their food. She was pleasantly surprised when she went to the cashier to pay her bill. She was told that the bill has been payed by someone who left her a note: "Because you prayed, we paid. Continue to raise your sons in Christ. God Bless". The lady was in tears as she the note as she did not know who the kind anonymous donor was who watched her

pray! She has posted the note on the internet where it continues to spread.

Whether we notice it or not, we are watched by people around us. How much should we be careful about our walk in public! Note what Paul wrote to the church in Corinth: "You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone" (2 Cor. 3:2). Paul means that the behaviour of Corinthian believers in public is like a testimonial in front of the general public about what they have learned from Paul. Christian conduct should be like an open book for all to read and evaluate.

'Ark Encounters' to open in July 2016

A life-size replica of Noah's Ark is being built by Ken Ham and his ministry, Answers in Genesis (AiG) in Kentucky, USA. The huge project, called 'Ark Encounters' will cost over \$90 million and is being built in accordance with the specific guidelines God laid out for Noah in the Bible.

Ken Ham is well-known for his defense of Creationism and has built a 'Creation Museum'. The Ark is being built at a nearby site. Ken says: "You know, it's been a big step of faith for AiG to build this life-size Ark. We have all sorts of battles. But we are burdened to reach as many people as we can with the truth of God's Word and the gospel and are undaunted. Those who come to see the



Ark will be impacted by the truth of God's Word." .

Even though there are a large number of people who do not want to do anything with ten commandments, there are a few others who do believe in the authenticity of the Bible and who are willing to take risks to spread the Gospel!

Rev. Billy Graham is 97!

Rev. Franklin Graham celebrated the birthday of his father Rev. Billy Graham, a few days ago as he turned 97. Franklin said: "Though he is no longer able to preach, his mind is still clear and his desire is still there to tell the world about God's love for them and how God sent His Son, Jesus Christ from heaven to earth to take the sins of all mankind to the cross, die, and arise on the third day. My father's desire is that all men and women everywhere would come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and trust Him and follow Him as their Lord." .



Franklin Graham with Billy Graham

The North Carolina Museum of History has opened a new exhibit chronicling the life of Billy Graham. The 5,000 square foot exhibit includes personal memorabilia and pictures of Graham's life and ministry.

A quotable quote

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."

- C.S. Lewis