



ദൈവം നമുക്കു മുൻപിൽ

യഹോവ തന്നെ നിനക്കു മുൻപായി നടക്കുന്നു. അവൻ നിന്നോടു കൂടെയിരിക്കും. നിന്നെ കൈവിടുകയില്ല, ഉപേക്ഷിക്കുകയുമില്ല, നീ പേടിക്കരുത്, ഭ്രമിക്കരുത് (ആവ. 31:8).

നൽകുന്ന വാഗ്ദത്തങ്ങളിൽ രണ്ട് പ്രധാനകാര്യങ്ങൾ അടങ്ങിയിരിക്കുന്നു. 1) ദൈവം മുൻപിൽ ഉണ്ട് (2) അവൻ കൂടെയിരിക്കുന്നു. വഴി നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് മുന്നേ നടക്കും. കൈ പിടിച്ച് നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് കൂടെ ഇരിക്കും. ഇത്ര വാഗ്ദത്തമാണ് ഈ പുതുവർഷത്തിൽ ദൈവം നമുക്കു നൽകുന്നത്. നാം ഇതുവരെ കണ്ടിട്ടില്ലാത്ത നിമിഷങ്ങൾ. ഈ വഴിക്കു നിങ്ങൾ മുമ്പേ പോയിട്ടില്ലല്ലോ. എന്നാൽ എല്ലാം കാണുന്ന കർത്താവ് നമുക്കു മുൻപിൽ നടക്കുന്നു.

വഴി നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് മുന്നേ നടക്കും. കൈപിടിച്ച് നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് കൂടെ ഇരിക്കും. ഇത്ര വാഗ്ദത്തമാണ് ഈ പുതുവർഷത്തിൽ ദൈവം നമുക്കു നൽകുന്നത്.

ഇതാ നാം ഒരു പുതുവർഷത്തിൽ പ്രവേശിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. ഏതു ജനതയ്ക്കും പുതുവർഷപുലരി പുളകമണിയിക്കുന്ന ഒന്നാണ്. പുത്തൻ പ്രതീക്ഷകൾ ഉദിച്ചുയരുന്നവസരം. അതുകൊണ്ടു തന്നെ പുതുവർഷത്തെ ഉത്സവ പ്രതീതിയോടെ തന്നെ വരവേൽക്കുന്നു. പോയ വർഷത്തിന് 365 ദിവസങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നുവോ എന്നു സംശയിച്ചു പോകത്തക്കവണ്ണം നാളുകൾ എല്ലാം വേഗം പറന്നുപോയി. പുതുവർഷത്തിന്റെ പടിക്കെട്ടുകളിൽ ഓരോന്നായി നാം ചവിട്ടി കയറാൻ തുടങ്ങിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഒരടിവെയ്ക്കുന്നതിനു മുൻപ് നാം അത് അറിയുന്നില്ല, അടുത്ത നിമിഷത്തിൽ എന്തു സംഭവിക്കുമെന്ന് ഗ്രഹിക്കാതെയാണ് നാം നമ്മുടെ കാലടികൾ വയ്ക്കുന്നത്.

മനുഷ്യനെ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്നതിനു മുമ്പ് മനുഷ്യന് ആവശ്യമുള്ളതെല്ലാം ദൈവം കരുതിയിരുന്നു. ഇന്ന് മനുഷ്യന്റെ അനേക ആവശ്യങ്ങളെ നിറവേറ്റുന്ന കൽക്കരി, ഗ്യാസ്, എണ്ണ ഇതൊക്കെ ഒരിക്കൽ മനുഷ്യന് ആവശ്യം വരുമെന്ന് കണ്ട് ദൈവം മുൻകൂർ നൽകിയിട്ടുള്ളതാണ്. നാളെകൾക്കായി ഒരുക്കങ്ങൾ ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് ദൈവം മുന്നിൽ നടക്കുന്നത് കണ്ണുള്ളവർക്ക് കാണുവാൻ കഴിയും. മിസ്രയീമിൽ ഏഴുവർഷം ക്ഷാമം ഉണ്ടാകുമെന്നും മുൻപിൽ കണ്ട ദൈവം സൂഭിക്ഷതയേയും അത് കൈകാര്യം ചെയ്യാൻ യോസഫിനെയും ഒരുക്കി ദൈവം മുന്നിൽ നടന്നു. എല്ലാം സംഭവങ്ങൾക്കും മുന്നിൽ അതിനെ നേരിടുവാനുള്ള ഒരുക്കങ്ങൾ ക്രമപ്പെടുത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് ദൈവം മുന്നിൽ ഉണ്ട്.

എന്നാൽ നാം ഒട്ടും ഭയപ്പെടേണ്ടതില്ല. നമ്മുടെ ദൈവം എല്ലാം അറിയുന്നു. അവൻ നമുക്കു മുൻപിൽ നടക്കുന്നു. നാം അവന്റെ പിമ്പിൽ നിന്നുകൊണ്ടാൽ മതി. മേലുദ്ധരിച്ച വാക്യം ദൈവം യോഗുവയോട് പറഞ്ഞതാണ്. അവർ മരുഭൂമിയുടെ മിക്കവാറും അന്ത്യത്തിൽ എത്തിയിരിക്കുന്നു. വാഗ്ദത്തനാട് മുന്നിൽ കാണാറായി. അതുവരെ നടത്തിയ മോശ കാലയവനികയിൽ മറയാൻ പോകുകയാണ് ഇനി ആർ നടത്തും. നാളെ എന്തു നടക്കും? ആ പ്രശ്നത്തെ യിസ്രായേൽ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുകയാണ്. അപ്പോഴാണ് ദൈവം യോഗുവയോടു സംസാരിക്കുന്നത്. എന്തെന്നാൽ യോഗുവയാണ് അടുത്ത നേതൃത്വം ഏറ്റെടുക്കേണ്ടത്. വിപത്തും വിഷമതയും മുന്നിൽ ഉണ്ട് എന്നാൽ അതല്ല യോഗുവ കാണേണ്ടത്. മുന്നിൽ നിൽക്കുന്ന യഹോവയെയാണ്. ഏത് വിപത്തിലും വിഷമതയിലും അവൻ മുന്നിൽ നിന്ന് താങ്ങിക്കൊള്ളും. അതാണ് ദൈവം യോഗുവയ്ക്ക് നൽകുന്ന ഉറപ്പ്. ഇതേ ഉറപ്പ് ദൈവം യിസ്രായേൽ ജനത്തിനും നൽകുന്നു. ആവ. 31:3-6. ദൈവം

അഞ്ചപ്പം കൊണ്ട് അയ്യായിരം പേരെ പോഷിപ്പിച്ച കർത്താവ് ഫിലിപ്പോസിനോട് ചോദിച്ചു. 'ഇവർക്ക് തിന്നുവാൻ നാം അപ്പം എവിടെ നിന്നു വാങ്ങിവരു'മെന്ന്. അതു അവനെ പരീക്ഷിപ്പാനത്രേ ചോദിച്ചത്. താൻ എന്തു ചെയ്യുവാൻ പോകുന്നുവെന്നു താൻ അറിഞ്ഞിരുന്നു. ഈ വർഷത്തിൽ നമുക്കും പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ നേരിടും. എവിടെനിന്നും അപ്പം വാങ്ങുമെന്ന് അറിഞ്ഞു കൂടാത്ത നിമിഷങ്ങളും, നമ്മുടെ വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ പരീക്ഷയുടെ വേളകൾ. അപ്പോഴെല്ലാം താൻ എന്തുചെയ്യുവാൻ പോകുന്നുവെന്നറിയുന്ന ഒരുവൻ നമുക്കു മുൻപിലുണ്ട്. എല്ലാം അവനിൽ സമർപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനും അവന്റെ സർവ്വശക്തിയെ ഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നതിനുമുള്ള അവസരങ്ങൾ.



Pastor K. A. Mathew

When All seems gone, CHRIST IS ALL!

But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68-69)

It is a new year! An outlook of hope, expectations, dreams, resolutions - all surface in our minds during this time. But deep in your heart you might be confused, lost, or trying to find meaning to much in life. Life seems sluggish, mundane, unexpected illness and medical diagnoses, deaths of many of our dear ones, tragedy after tragedy, the world is ending, or is the world ending. So much to be done, less time in hand. What do I do? Where do I start? Honestly, Where do I go?

In John 6: 60-71, we see a similar response from Peter, but with a different perspective. "Where else would I go?" (v. 68)

John 6 is a very interesting chapter. It starts with 5000 men and ends with 11 men. It starts with people flocking in thousands. It ends with people leaving. It starts with so much enthusiasm, it dwindles down with confusion and uncertainty. In the midst of it all, How can I find God? How can I still find hope In Christ? The truth is even when all seems gone, Christ is all we need and have. Here are some truths about battles in Christian Life that we often do not want to face. And which is exactly what Christ wanted His disciples and us to understand.

1. Experience vs Expectation

Following Christ is not a mere experience of His work for us, but a willingness to live His expectations for us. Christ himself alludes to this in v. 26 when he says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were

filled". But when Christ raises the bar, people are not willing to meet His expectation and starts to leave. One thing we need to understand is that Christ is not a car salesman. When we go to purchase a car, a price is given to us. But we do not fall for that and we negotiate. Even though, it seems that the salesperson is so adamant on his sales price, he always finds room, because his need is to sell his product. But Christ gives us a mandate and He does not compromise or negotiate on the character of

We need to understand that Christ is not a car salesman. He gives us a mandate and He does not compromise or negotiate on the character of who He is and the essence of His expectation for us. He is gracious and loving God, but not at the expense of His divine purpose and plan for each of us.

who He is and the essence of His expectation for us. He is gracious and loving God, but not at the expense of His divine purpose and plan for each of us. Even when everything may not be going the way you expected, and your experience in life does not seem all easy and sweet as it used to be once upon a time, the essence of that experience is connected to your attitude towards meeting God's expectations about you, and not God trying to meet your expectations in life.

2. Material Life vs Eternal Life

God wants us to see beyond our needs that satisfy our material life, and long for what satisfies our eternal life. In John 6:40 Jesus talks about the one who "beholds" and "believes" in Him will have eternal life and Christ will raise him on the last day. Again in v. 54 He says, "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life" and he will be raised on the last day. A parallel contrast of this scripture helps us understand that our foremost desire in life to



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Living a life for Christ involves resistance from all ends, even when it feels like the devil is winning. But persistence with trusting God's sovereignty is what prevails.

I pray that you renew your perspective on establishing goals in life. As much as they are important, your focus needs to be on recognizing and realizing the expectations that God wants you to meet. Let that define your goals and ambitions for life on earth.

obtain eternal life and to be raised on the last day. This is to fix our eyes on Jesus who is eternal and believe in His Word. In other words, feed on Jesus and His Word, and be satisfied. When all things seem to be going haywire in life, your focus in God's Word, will determine your level of satisfaction and joy in life.

3. Persistence vs Resistance

Living a life for Christ involves resistance from all ends, even when it feels like the devil is winning. But persistence with trusting God's sovereignty is what prevails.

Towards the end of this Chapter we find Jesus even identifying one among them as the Devil. Jesus knew well that one among those

He chose would betray Him. It all seems confusing. It feels that the Devil is winning. That He knew this beforehand, but had no choice. That He looks more or less the weaker one. That the people are leaving Him, and He is not taking the effort to bring them back. That the resistance is so strong, there is nothing more beyond this. This is what it all seems to be from an outer perspective.

But it actually sounds like this. Whenever it appears that resistance to Jesus is winning in this world, the people of God need a very robust and clear vision of God's sovereignty over all things, including when there is resistance to Jesus. Resistance is beyond betrayal. It is beyond your suffering. It is beyond nails and the thorns. It is beyond hatred and bitterness. And it is beyond even death. Because in His sovereign will, there is the eternal truth of resurrection (v. 62). It all seems it's over. And maybe in your eyes, it is over. You have not found an answer to many of life's hardest questions. Let me go even further. Right now, you are even having a hard time seeing Christ in this moment of life journey that you are struggling. But even then, it is your clear vision of God's sovereignty over all things that imbues that level persistence within you. It is the fiber of the framework of hope that you embody. So, the gist of it all, is essentially what William

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Barclay says in his commentary on John 6, "In the last analysis, Christianity is not a philosophy which we accept; it is not a theory to which we give allegiance; it is not something which is thought out; it is not something which is intellectually arrived at. It is a personal response to Jesus Christ. It is the answer of the heart to the magnet of Christ. It is an allegiance and a love which you give because your heart will not allow you to do anything else". (William Barclay, The Gospel of John, vol. 1, p. 230)

Isn't it why we sing,

"Then on that Third at break of Dawn,
The Son of Heaven rose again.
O trampled death, where is your sting?
The angels roar for Christ the King" ...

"Death could not hold you.

The veil tore before you.
You silenced the boast of sin and grave.

The heavens are roaring,
the praise of your glory,
For you are raised to life again.

You have no rival.
You have no equal.
Now and forever,
Our God reigns"

(*What a Beautiful Name*,
Words and Music by Ben
Fielding & Brooke
Ligertwood ' 2016 Hillsong

Music Publishing. CCLI Song No. 7068424)

This new year, I pray that you renew your perspective on establishing goals in life. As much as they are important, your focus needs to be on recognizing and realizing the expectations that God wants you to meet. Let that define your goals and ambitions for life on earth. And in pursuit of this life, your destination of all things needs to be eternity and not what is material that fades away. That will determine your satisfaction and joy in life. "The Joy of the Lord is our strength". Finally, through all these struggles in life, the one who finishes the course is the one who stays persistent, fixing our eyes on Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. Even through the toughest resistance in life, stay strong in the resurrected King. Let our framework of hope be renewed. **When all seems gone, Christ is all!** ■

Praying for others: *A privilege and a responsibility!*

Meditations from
"Ephesians"
1. From Chapter 1

"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power." (Eph. 1:15-19)

Apostle Paul had ministered in the city of Ephesus for over three years (Acts 19:1-10; 20:31) and then he had departed to other places to preach the gospel. It was now about five years later that he is penning this epistle to the believers at Ephesus. The church in Ephesus had grown considerably



since then and furthermore, Paul had heard some wonderful reports about the abiding faith of the believers in Jesus as well as their explicit love for all the saints. Love is the outgrowth of faith, and faith manifests itself by love. Faith works by love (Gal. 5:6), and love is the proof of discipleship (John 13:35; 15:12; 1 John 3:14). Their faith in the Lord Jesus brought the miracle of salvation to their lives and their love for all the saints demonstrated the transforming reality of their conversion.

Upon hearing the heart-warming news, Paul lifted his eyes to the heavens and expressed a prayer of thanksgiving along with a request for spiritual enlightenment for the believers in Ephesus. His thanksgiving is for past attainments, but his intercession is for future advancements. This recorded prayer of Paul for the believers in Ephesus gives us a model of what to include in our prayers for other believers as well. The highlight of Paul's prayer was that he longed for the believers in Ephesus would appreciate and appropriate some essential elements in their own lives like spiritual illumination (vv. 16-23) and spiritual strength (3:14-21). Let us examine the prayer of Apostle Paul in this scriptural passage to understand what we should include in our intercessory prayers for other saints of God:

Paul first commends the Ephesian believers for what they were doing well (vv. 15-16). Their faith expressed their trust in Jesus Christ, and their love evidenced proper relationships with other believers. These qualities propelled Paul to give thanks to God repeatedly for these wonderful brethren and then to petition God for some

essential elements.

Paul then asks God to give the Ephesian believers both wisdom and understanding of Himself through the ministry of the Holy Spirit so they might gain greater knowledge of God. The reason for this is because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of wisdom (Isa. 11:2), and of revelation (1 Cor. 2:10).

Finally, Paul specifies three areas of divine knowledge which he desires for the saints:

1. The hope of His calling points forward to the future, and it includes the fact that we shall be with Christ and be like Him forever.

2. The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints mean that the whole universe has been put under the reign of Christ, and we, His Bride, are reigning with Him over it.

3. The exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe is the power which God used in our redemption, which He uses in our preservation, and which He will yet use in our glorification.

Thus Paul prays that we may know the hope to which He calls us, the riches He possesses in us and the power He extends toward us!

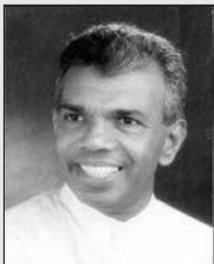
Apostle Paul is a good example for us to emulate, and praying for others is both a privilege and a responsibility. Paul wrote prayers in other epistles as well to encourage believers (see Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-12; 2 Thess. 1:11-12). He was intentional in giving thanks and making mention of the believers in Ephesus in his continual prayers. We also need to check if fellow believers need encouragement through verbal and written prayers. Thereafter, we should let them know that we are praying for them as well as encourage them by showing our love for them in word and deed!

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6:18) ■



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Cherian
D.Min., Ph.D.**

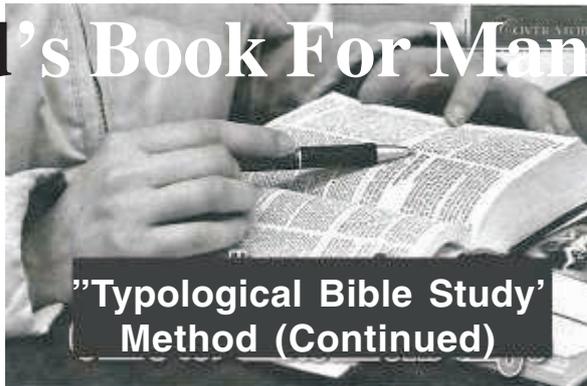
is the Pastor of Carolinas Christian Assembly in Matthews, NC that serves all Asian Indians in and around the Charlotte area. He is also the President of United in the WORD Ministries, Inc. He is a certified Clinical Chaplain, a Bible Teacher and a Premarital Counselor. Visit his ministry website @ <http://www.unitedintheword.com>



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Biblical types are designed by the God of history who is the God of both Old and New Testaments. In this article, we will consider a few types that are found in the New Testament



There are many examples of the use of typology in the Holy Scriptures both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. We will consider only

a few that are found in the New Testament in this article. There are many more that a bible student can find.

John the Baptizer used the sacrificial lamb of the Old Testament as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see in the Gospel of John 1:27 that as he saw Jesus coming to him he said, look and see the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John was not only an Israelite, but also son of priest Zachariah. Of course, John the baptizer was very familiar with the sacrificial lamb of the Old Testament for the sins of the people.

Jesus Christ Himself showed many Old Testament scriptures as a type of Christ and that He is the antitype, the greater fulfillment. While Jesus was talking to Nicodemus, a leader of the Jewish people, Jesus brought to his attention the event of Moses lifting up a brazen serpent in the wilderness camp of Israel as we read in Numbers 21. Jesus who knew no sin took upon Himself the sin and curse of all humanity and was lifted up on a tree. (See 2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus became sin and sin offering for us. Just like all those who look upon the brazen serpent were healed, all those who look upon the crucified Christ by faith will be healed - saved from sin sickness.

In the Gospel of Mark 12:1-9 Jesus speaks of the rejection of the stone by the builders of the house as we find in Psalms 118:22,23. This He uses as a type of His own people rejecting Him. Yet He is the chief cornerstone of the church where the apostles and prophets are the foundation stones and every believer is a living stone. (See 1 Tim. 3:5, Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:4-7).

Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke of Moses the deliverer - leader of the children of Israel from Egypt as a type and Christ the Great deliverer from sin as the antitype. He is the prophet like unto Moses. He spoke of Jonah being in the belly of the fish as a type of Christ being in the belly of the earth - in the grave. He is greater than Jonah, greater than Moses, greater than the temple, greater than Solomon, though all of them were types of Christ in some ways and Christ is the anti-type. (See Matthew 12 and Luke 11).

While Jesus was conversing with the disciples

who were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the scriptures beginning Moses and with all the

prophets and the Psalms (Luke 24:27 & 44)

Apostles use typology in their writings. Apostle Paul's use of typology is found in many of his writings. In Romans 5:14 he wrote that Adam is a type of he who is to come, speaking of Jesus Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15:45, Jesus is called the last Adam. Paul wrote about the first man Adam as the representative of all human race and the second or last man Adam that is Christ who took the penalty of sin of all mankind upon Himself so that all who believe and receive Him must be saved. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-11, Paul uses typology very clearly and says that what happened to the children of Israel in the Old Testament is an example for us. The rock from which they drank in the wilderness is Christ, meaning the rock was a type of the Rock of Ages cleft for us.

The writer of the Book of Hebrews uses typology extensively. Many Bible scholars think that apostle Paul is the writer of the book of Hebrews. There are those who think that Apollos, or Barnabas who traveled with Paul is the writer of the Book of Hebrews. Who ever it is, he uses plenty of typology in this book.

Apostle Peter uses typology in 1 Peter 3:20-22 and in his sermon on the day of Pentecost as we read in Acts 3:22. Peter is saying that Moses in Deut. 18:15-16 was talking about Jesus when he said that God will raise up a prophet like Moses from among you. Jesus is the greater deliverer than Moses, but like him in many ways.

Few ways to Identify Biblical typology:

Biblical types are designed by the God of history who is the God of both Old and New Testaments. Even though it is not clearly stated, some characteristics of types can be found in the scriptures:

1. *Types are historical realities,*
2. *Types involves similarities and / or dissimilarities,*
3. *Anti-types must be greater/ superior historical realities,*
4. *Types and anti-types must be discernible from the biblical texts,*
5. *Types and antitypes should not be fanciful imaginations of anyone that studies the Bible. ■*

“Grace and peace”:

Time to kneel before Him!

“All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God”

(2 Corinthians 4:15)

“The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 1:14)

The words of Paul the apostle addressed to Timothy quoted above express his gratitude to God for the mercy received by him. As we have entered into a new year, let us ask ourselves how grateful are we for the grace that we receive each day in abundance and without measure!

Grace (= Xaris) is unmerited favor of God - favor, gratitude and kindness. It is, primarily, the gift of blessing brought to man by Jesus Christ and the bestowal of all blessings which we receive from God each day.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:15, this grace is extended to more and more people, through increase of thanksgiving to the glory of God. God's grace is not just for His children alone, but it extends, spreads to more and more people through the praises we offer to God and kneeling before Him. The glory of God is poured out to others through our living, giving praises and kneeling in the presence of the Lord. This is the right time and the high time as we live in this 'Dispensation of Grace' to seek His grace and mercy for the overflow of the glory of God through our praises by honoring God, adoring God, kneeling before God, sharing the love of God to this world.

Paul and Silas were thrown in prison where they began praying and singing and all other prisoners listening which led to an earthquake. The prison was shaken, the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. Hence we understand that grace was extended even to the whole prison.

The glory of God overflows through our praises, honoring God, thanking God, sharing the love of God and sharing the gospel and this grace of God pardons a sinner - the grace of God meets any sinner in his/her condition.

Grace helps the sinner to obtain mercy. It is a free gift of God which comes in abundance and in its fullness and it is sufficient for every person. The greatest thing as children of God that we can do in our Christian walk is to pray and to give thanks to God for the abundance of grace and blessings we receive each day. Let the glory of God and the grace of God be revealed and extended through our persistent prayer and let us do the work of God who has enabled us to be in this period of

grace until the return of our Lord. May the God of comfort, grace and the Holy Spirit from above guide and strengthen us each day to live a godly life and to win many souls for Christ.

Peace (=Freedom from disturbance or freedom from anxiety or distress). Hebrew word **Shalom** denotes harmony, wholeness, completeness and prosperity.

The word "Peace" is mentioned 429 times in the Bible starting from Genesis 15:15 from the life of Abraham. 'Peace unto you' does not mean that we don't get into any trouble. It means we have a great hope and we have the highest good coming on the way. The biblical concept of peace is that even during great trials as mentioned before about Paul and Silas in the Philippi prison, we can remain confident that God is gracious and will always be gracious to us.

"Peace, be still": Jesus tells believers or disciples to remain calm even in fearful moments, even when they see the storm raging against them. In the most turbulent times, Jesus with authority, commanded and rebuked the mighty wind and said "Peace, be still". Immediately the storm ceased.

The promise and the assurance that our Savior Lord Jesus Christ has given to us is, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

As Christian believers, even in troubled times when everything seems to go upside down, the peace of Christ dwells within us, the peace of God rules our hearts. We know that the Lord's glorious presence and unending source of strength are given to every child of God during difficulties.

Let us be reminded of Paul's saying, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4) and David's assurance in the Lord, "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence". Indeed, what a great privilege we the children of God enjoy! God's presence, peace and joy each day! Let God's peace, grace and mercy surround us each day and lead us to a glorious victorious life in Christ Jesus this new year.



Rev. Berly Varghese
Houston

As Christian believers, even in troubled times when everything seems to go upside down, the peace of Christ dwells within us, the peace of God rules our hearts. We know that the Lord's glorious presence and unending source of strength are given to every child of God during difficulties.

The Issue of "The Origin Of The Universe"!

One of the difficulties we encounter when we consider the question of "origin" is that we are confronted with the limitations of scientific inquiry. Since scientific ideas are undergoing changes, no presently conceived cosmological theory for the origin of the universe on scientific grounds is completely adequate.

1. Can science trace the processes into the past on the basis of the laws of nature?

The origin of the universe is a unique one-time event that cannot be repeated. When we deal with matters concerning the origins, we need to recognize the difference between 'operation science' and 'origin science'.

Operation science deals with the way things normally operate. It examines how the world normally works in the present, and seeks answers that are testable by repeated observations.

On the other hand, origin science studies events that happened only once and has no natural explanation. It looks at how things began not how they work. Such things that happened only once, by their nature, do not happen again. Origin science uses analogies between the kinds of cause-effect relationships that we see today and the kind of effects about which studies are being carried out. We know that it will only cause confusion if we apply the principles of operation science to explain how the world got here in the first place. We must use origin science to understand the origins, not the operation science.

2. How do we relate the doctrine of creation in the Bible to the present understanding of scientific discoveries?

About sixty years ago, a vast majority of leading scientists believed that the discoveries in modern science have eliminated the need to look for a supernatural Creator. In this context, the declaration in the Bible "In the beginning God created" (Genesis 1:1) was



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considered as the most controversial statements ever made. But the tremendous new discoveries of modern science made during the past six

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decades provide compelling evidence that a supernatural Creator created the universe as the biblical book of Genesis affirms.

Today we have the benefit of Astrophysics, Cosmology, Molecular Biology, Information Technology and the like which provide important milestones in evaluating possibilities regarding the origin of the universe and life in it. Also new technical and theoretical tools have

enabled astronomers to measure some of the most important features of the universe.

As the age of the universe is measurable, the scientists now say that it began about 13.6 billion years ago. Theoretical physicist Stephen W. Hawking and several other scientists say, "So long as the universe had a beginning, we could suppose it had a creator."

If there is a creator who brought the universe into existence, He must be intelligent and powerful. When we look at other physical constants and laws that are established to sustain the universe, we can say that the scientifically revealed creator uniquely and decisively matches the character and the characteristics of the biblically revealed God.

3. Can you point out some of these physical constants that are required for a universe capable of producing and sustaining life?

From its inception, the universe had to be fine-tuned to an incomprehensible precision for the existence of life. The precision seen in the universe is so utterly fantastic and mathematically accurate to make an environment suitable for life. For example, the earth had to be located in the right part of the galaxy for life to appear. Some of the critical parameters include earth's distance from the sun, sun's mass and size, its location relative to the centre of the galaxy, tilt of planetary axis which is necessary for seasons, ratio of oceans to continents, Oxygen-Nitrogen ratio, Carbon dioxide level, speed of light, atmospheric transparency and the like. About 150 such critical parameters have been identified. A small change in any of these could make life impossible. These laws and constants conspire in a mathematically incredible way to make life in the universe possible. There is no fundamental reason why these values have to be the way they are. The fine-tuning of the universe is pointing towards an Intelligent Designer.

4. What prevents us from believing that such a precision can be established by random chance?

'Chance' is only a mathematical abstraction with no real existence. Chance has no power to cause anything. Since chance is nothing, it cannot do anything. We can see from the above mentioned parameters that the conditions for life are far from random chance. Moreover, intelligent life has the ability to think and act in a purposeful way.

To say that the universe was created by chance is to say that it was created by nothing or was "self-created." The idea of self-creation cannot withstand even a rudimentary intellectual critique. The probability of something physical coming from nothing is zero. Postulating the existence of God as Creator makes sense here. The scientific evidence of contemporary cosmology is pointing toward a universe designed for a hospitable cosmic habitat. The whole realm of nature shouts about the design of the universe.

5. How about looking for a purpose behind such a deliberate design?

Design always implies a purpose. We have to accept that the entire creation and all in it are in the purposes of the Designer. The design is purposeful not only for the universe but also regarding each one of us. We are wonderfully made to accomplish God's purposes. We are designed to experience and enjoy higher things in life that are beyond the temporal. Purpose, surely, is derived from our beliefs. What we believe therefore is important. Our faith is manifested in the way we live. What we believe affects our life-style and the decisions we make. Our faith should be rooted in the faithful character of God.

Faith in God provides specific, comforting answers to a number of questions of life that science cannot answer. Faith gives our life a stability that cannot be shaken. The heart of the concept of faith is the quality of "reliability" or "steadfastness." It is a reliance on the almighty God in matters beyond our control.

6. What is the status of the theory of evolution as we consider the origin of life?

The theory of evolution suggests that all living things on earth have come into being through accidental, random natural process that began with a primeval mass of subatomic particles and radiation billions years ago. Accordingly, life formed from non-living matter and gradually evolved from a simple cell into a diversity of plant and animal life as well as humanity.

But the scientific evidence, required to prove this theory, has never been found. The status of this theory is that of a probability statement. The only

Some of the critical parameters include earth's distance from the sun, sun's mass and size, its location relative to the centre of the galaxy, tilt of planetary axis which is necessary for seasons, ratio of oceans to continents, Oxygen-Nitrogen ratio, Carbon dioxide level, speed of light, atmospheric transparency and the like.

alternative to evolution is obviously the theory that a supernatural God purposefully designed and created the universe and all in it including human beings. Some admit that they accepted evolution despite the lack of evidence primarily because the only logical alternative theory of creation was unacceptable.

But the number of scientists who have either publicly rejected evolution, or have expressed very serious reservations about it is growing as the great advances made in the study of genetics, molecular biology and fossil record. In spite of new findings, evolution is accepted generally by some modern scientists as an "article of faith" rather than as a result of logical analysis of scientific facts. Such denial of facts is a "philosophical necessity" for those who are antagonistic to the doctrine of special creation by God.

7. On what intellectual basis do they deny such facts?

The evolutionists have regarded the inanimate forces of the environment or nature as having the ability to create and think. Despite their denial of intelligent design, the theory of evolution actually requires an intelligent, purposeful mind directing the process. It is far more logical and consistent with the latest scientific evidence to conclude that the universe and life-forms were produced as a result of intelligent design.

It is not evidence that forces some scientists to insist on an impersonal evolution of life, but their strong prejudice against supernatural creation. There can be other reasons for denying God. Unbelief can also be a moral issue. Someone rightly said: "Atheism is more a moral issue of the "heart" rather than a rational issue of the "head"!

However, many of the leading scientists who lived in the past centuries found no contradiction between their discoveries in science and their acceptance of the authority of the Bible regarding God's creation of the universe.

8. Are there sufficient objective evidences to argue for supernatural creation?

As an explanation for the origin and development of life, the bridge of intelligent design looks strong enough to bear the weight of current facts and discoveries. One can find compelling evidences of a super-intelligent design in the arrangement of atoms, the universe and the genetic code, as well as in the complexity of every single biological system.

The ability of biological organisms to reorganize and regenerate themselves has puzzled philosophers and scientists since ancient times. It is the proteins in the cell that determine what each cell does. Amino acids are linked together in the right sequence to create protein. About 200 amino acids have to be brought together for the right functions in developing a cell. The system to do sequencing must be living and intelligent. Linking by 'chance' to create one protein molecule is like a "tornado whirling through a junkyard assembling a 747 aircraft."

Every cell of every plant and animal

has to have a DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) molecule. Guidance to direct the sequencing of amino acids comes from DNA working with RNA (ribonucleic acid). Although human DNA appears to be the most complex, the DNA found in even the simplest form of bacteria is still enormously complex. DNA serves as the information storehouse. DNA is the repository for a digital code containing the instructions for telling the cell's machinery how to build proteins. The genetic code in DNA within every cell communicates to the rest of the trillions of cells in our body through RNA genetic transfer material found in every cell.

Research during the last five decades had enabled scientists to unlock the mysteries of the genetic code. They found that DNA actually stores information in the form of a four-character digital code. Four chemical bases, namely Guanine, Cytosine, Thymine, and Adenine are arranged as letters to convey precise instructions. To record the genetic instructions encoded in human DNA, we would need more than five billion letters that would require up to 3000 volumes of a thousand-page print out, while that of a simple bacteria would fill a book of at least 1000 pages.

To build one protein, it requires 1,200 – 2,000 such bases or letters, which is a lot of information. It is the information that makes the molecules into something that actually functions. Two important issues in this connection are about the

of information. Moreover the sequencing to arrange different kinds of cells (namely, cells to be arranged into tissues, then tissues into organs and the organs into the overall body plans) has to come from intelligent cause.

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Naturalistic theories that rely solely on matter and energy are not able to account for information. It rather transcends matter and energy. We can infer from the evidence of genetics the existence of a Mind that is far greater than our own. It is as if the Creator autographed every cell. It must be a personal creation.

To cite an example, redundant patterns on beach sands caused by winds and waves are very impersonal. But if "God loves you" is found

source of these assembly instructions, and how the information is programmed into the DNA structure.

This kind of information is invariably the result of the mind, not chance. We know from our experience that creation of new information is habitually associated with conscious activity.

Information cannot be derived from material properties; it is the hallmark of the mind. One cannot invoke self-organizing process to explain the origin

written on sand, it is a personal creation. Thus far no one was able to prove how the personal human being resulted from the combination of impersonal evolution plus chance plus time! Interpretation of evidence points to an intelligent designer. Design implies that information has been applied to accomplish a purpose. Invoking God may not be strictly part of science; but one should not shrink back if that is where facts fit. ●



Adding beauty

To many it might seem like a random picture, but it isn't so to me. This cactus sits on my bathroom wall and I happen to see it everyday. But today it caught my attention, why?

A simple thought - but one which brought a great source of encouragement. So here it is for all my friends:

The white spots that you see isn't anything else but the thorns. I was thinking, often we just classify cactus as an ugly looking, thorny plant, but then today I was standing there and admiring the way the thorns add beauty to that plant. Imagine this plant without those white thorns --- plain and ordinary, wouldn't it be?

Similarly in our life, troubles bring out the beauty within us. They add value to us. So next time you are in trouble, praise God and say a word of thanks for adding beauty to you. ●

- (Contributed by a sister in U.K.)



Wycliffe celebrates 75 years of Bible translation

Kristie Frieze of Wycliffe USA says: "This is our 75th anniversary. It's pretty exciting to think about what God has done for the last 75 years through this work. There are just so many great stories". To commemorate this



milestone, Wycliffe has released a book titled *Till All Have Heard*, which tells the history of the organization and the work God has helped them accomplish. Wycliffe was founded by William Cameron Townsend and has been instrumental in translating the complete Bible into over 600 languages around the world.

It is reported that Wycliffe Bible translators have begun work on reaching the deaf community with a sign language Bible translation. Experts say that, although deaf people can read the Bible, having it in sign language communicates to them on a deeper level.

We must congratulate them for doing such an immensely difficult task and achieving great success.

Museum of the Bible opens!

At the dedication service of the 'Museum of the Bible', Steve Green, co-founder said: "This is a dream of millions all over the world that love this book, that use it as a guide for their life, and we just want to take some time and celebrate and dedicate this space to our God". The museum is a 430,000-square-foot, eight-storey building in the capital city of USA. The museum took three years and \$500 million to build. There are 1,600 items on display, about three-quarters of them are Bibles and biblical manuscripts. The "narrative" floor includes a 40-minute multimedia

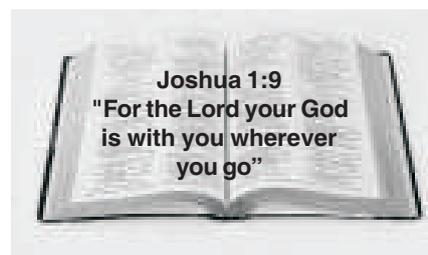
retelling of the Hebrew Bible and a 12-minute recounting of the New Testament. In one area of the "impact" floor, the original draft of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" lies under glass and a personal Bible of evangelist Billy Graham. The "history" floor features small fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls. There are separate galleries, such as one featuring reproductions of frescoes of the Vatican Library and another presenting treasures from the Israel Antiquities Authority that include a touchable stone from the grounds of the Temple Mount.

Green concluded his remarks thus: "Let the Bible have an impact in your life as it has in my life or our family's life and so many people all over the world, because that's ultimately what we want to do - hopefully motivate people to engage with this book to let it have an impact on their life". That is our prayer, too.

**The Bible verse of the year:
Joshua 1:9**

The leading trends in Bible reading over the past year 2017 was revealed in the 'YouVersion Bible App' Review. According to the Review, the verse that was shared, bookmarked and highlighted most often by Bible App users around the world was Joshua 1:9: "This is my command - be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go". The review also revealed that more people than ever are using the Bible App to read and listen to God's Word.

There were some astounding statistics which included 1.4 billion highlights, bookmarks and notes created



in the Bible App, 222 million verses shared, 16.7 Bible chapters read, and 39 million Bible plans completed. According to the review, the most popular verses by countries were (in addition to Joshua 1:9) Jeremiah 29:11 in the U.K., Singapore, the Philippines, Nigeria, Malaysia, Japan, Kenya, Ghana, Indonesia, and Canada, and Romans 8:28 in the U.S., Romania, Russia, and Taiwan.

The Word of God comforts us in any situation. It is sweeter than honey. The promises of God are unchanging!

Is there heaven or hell?

A new survey from 29,133 interviews in 38 countries, shows that in a number of Western nations, the population no longer believes in heaven or hell, even if they also claim to believe in God. A minority of the population in Germany, Norway, Great Britain, Australia, Denmark, Sweden, Canada, Spain, France, Japan and Belgium said they believed in heaven or hell. Belief in heaven in Japan is just 19 per cent while it is 84 per cent in South Africa. Only 19 percent of people in Spain think that there is hell!. Quite a large proportion identify as Christians and yet quite a small proportion believe in Heaven and Hell, so you wonder what those who identify as Christian actually believe. In terms of the Christian message, it's important that people believe in both. They are both things that Jesus talked about a lot. Part of what He spoke about was both heaven and hell - hell to be avoided and heaven to be entered into.

People have set their hearts to accumulate "treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal" and lost sight of eternity. Whether you believe in heaven/hell or not, the eternal truth cannot be changed. So, "Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven". These are the words of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

As C.S. Lewis famously said: "A man can't be taken to hell, or sent to hell: you can only get there on your own steam"!

Children's

CONCERN



FOR GOD'S GLORY!

Joseph and Jobbins were good friends from when they were in third grade. They went to school together, played together, studied together and even their families went together on a trip last summer. This year they are in seventh grade and they have been taking guitar lessons from the same teacher.

Each year their music teacher organizes a concert where the students perform. Their parents and friends are invited too. Joseph and Jobbins practiced many days so that they could present a melodious piece of music. They encouraged one another and critiqued each other's practice sessions.

On the day of the concert, Joseph and Jobbins got ready and arrived at the concert venue very early. Jobbins

was beginning to feel nervous about performing. He didn't think he was ready or that he had practiced enough. He began packing his things to leave. Joseph realized what was happening. He asked Jobbins to come with him to one of the dressing rooms. He said that a verse that has encouraged him during such times is Isaiah 41:10, where we read that we should not be afraid because God is with us. We should not be intimidated because He is our God. He will strengthen us. He will help us. He will

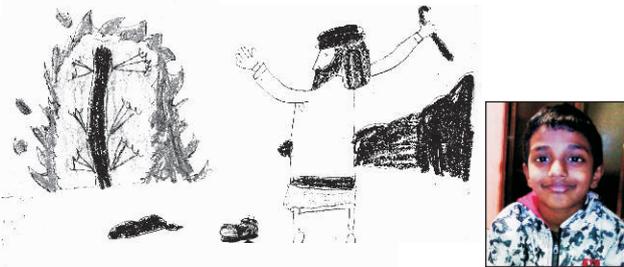
support us with His victorious right hand. Joseph and Jobbins knelt down and prayed, asking God's help and strength to perform for God's glory that day.

As Joseph and Jobbins prayed, Jobbins felt his nervousness decreasing. He began to focus on God's promises to be near His children and to help His children in times of need. When Jobbins name was announced, he boldly walked to the center of the stage and performed his best performance for God's glory. He got a standing ovation for his performance. He took a bow and walked off the stage and thanked God for helping him with his performance. Let us remember Colossians 3:23, Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the LORD, not for human masters.



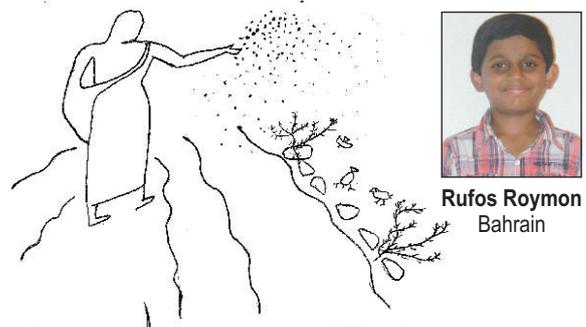
Beena Aunty

Moses and the burning bush



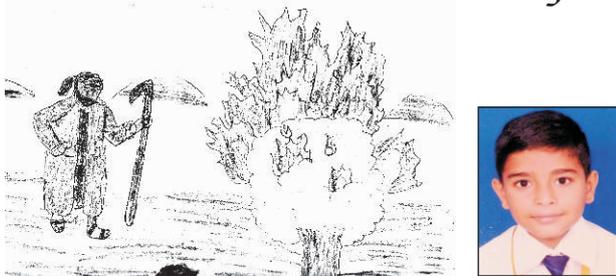
Savio Alan Mathew
Sanpada

There was a man who went out to saw



Rufos Roymon
Bahrain

Moses and the burning bush



Aben John Mathew
Mumbai

Jesus is the best carrier of our heavy loads



Pheba Susan Sam
Kerala

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Thomas Nainan:

Remembering the Legacy Left by Him - A Legacy of Humbleness, Discipline and Commitment!

"Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:3)

Br. Thomas Nainan (76), who was an editorial board member of Suvartha magazine and who played a significant role in the formation and growth of IPC Maharashtra State has finished his race and entered into glory on January 2, 2018. The funeral service was conducted on Monday, January 8, 2018 at Niranam, Kerala. By his departure, 'Suvartha family' has lost a strong supporter and well wisher. The Pentecostal Community in Mumbai will miss a visionary and a man of principles.

He was the treasurer of the IPC Northern Region (West District), comprising of Maharashtra and Gujarat and later the first treasurer when IPC Maharashtra State was formed. He served as the Director of IPC Sunday School Association, Maharashtra for 12 years and as the Controller of Examinations for three years.

He was born to Pastor K.M. Thomas and Mrs. Mariamma Thomas on August 4, 1941. After matriculation,



Written by:
Mathews Paul
on behalf of:
Editorial Board, "Suvartha"

**"Absent from the body,
present with Christ"**



Thomas Nainan

he was in Salem for seven years. According to the divine plan of God, he came to Mumbai in 1965 and worked with RCF for two years. He joined NOCIL, one of the biggest chemical companies in Maharashtra, in 1967 and worked there till his retirement.

He married Annamma Nainan on Nov 4, 1965 and was blessed with three children. He got baptized in 1965 by Pr. Mathew Samuel at IPC Chembur and continued in fellowship with this church for 13 years as an active member and in various executive positions. In 1978, he took initiative to start a congregation in Thane for IPC. His effective leadership and

commitment to Lord's work was the main factor of the growth of IPC Thane Church. After 15 years of fruitful service in Thane, he moved to western suburbs and was instrumental in starting churches in Bhayander, Vasai and Charkop.

Br. Thomas Nainan was a good organizer, effective leader and above all a motivator. He was a man of faith with integrity, humbleness and principles. His priority was always the Lord's ministry and growth of the church. It was very difficult for him to accommodate wrong practices that are going on in churches and was bold enough to stand like a one man army for doctrines and his convictions. He never closed his eyes towards the needy and was always a step ahead to extend his support for any ministry oriented initiatives.

His face always radiated the message of happiness and he faced all situations with a smile. He was diagnosed with cancer in 2008 but fought against it for the last ten years. His trust in God and positive approach to sickness enabled him to face all odds of life with courage and smile. He never grumbled in adversities, but found the will of God in them. Those who visited him during his sick days could only see his smiling face and courageous words. He found time to laugh with them and share joyous moments.

He was a good writer and teacher. His editorials and articles in Suvartha

Thomas Nainan:

Remembering The Influential Life Of A Disciple Of Jesus

Thomas Nainan, a native of Niranam, Kerala and long-term resident of Mumbai, was my father Pastor K. T. Mathew's only brother. These brothers and their three sisters were born to pioneer Pentecostal workers K. M. Thomas and Mariamma Thomas. IPC General Secretary Pastor T. N. Abraham was their mother's brother. Thomas Nainan, whom I call Uppappan, passed away on January 2, 2018 at his native place. His brother and one sister preceded him. He left behind his wife, three children, and several grandchildren.

Thomas Nainan was a person of significant influence on my life. He cared for people, supported people in need, served the body of Christ, honored his parents, and financially supported their ministry in an unselfish fashion. In these matters he was an example to me and my family members. He believed in the simplicity of the Gospel and lived an uncomplicated life, bearing witness to the Gospel without drawing attention to himself or his sacrifices.

I was a recipient of his generosity.



Dr. Thomson K. Mathew
Oral Roberts University

One of the stories that has been passed down within our family has to do with Uppappan's generosity even as a school boy. We are told that one day he cracked open his precious mud bank to give me, his little nephew, all the coins from the bank as a gift. It turned out to be symbolic of the life he lived as an adult. I recall with gratitude how he helped me with my college education in India, and contributed to buy my plane ticket when I had the opportunity to study in America.

His service at the local and regional levels within IPC Maharashtra is well known. He is remembered as a faithful servant of God who had no great

interest in official titles.

Suvartha was dear to his heart. He served on its board and encouraged me to join the team and write. He was a well-wisher and promoter of Suvartha. His home-going is a loss to the magazine. He also wrote from time to time. The essence of all his articles was to practice the Pentecostal message we confess and preach. He had the testimony of integrity to write those articles.

It has been my pleasure to preach at meetings he organized in Kerala and Mumbai. It has also been my joy to travel with him within India and USA.

My Uppappan was a disciple of Jesus Christ. He practiced what he confessed and wrote about. Along with family and the community of faith, I will miss him. I plan to follow his example of following Christ, knowing that to be absent from the body is to be present with Christ, and that one of these days, the trumpet will sound. There is going to be a meeting in the air!

Farewell, my dear Uppappan!

"Thomas Nainan: Remembering the legacy left by him" *Continuation from previous page*

Magazine were thought provoking and inspirational. He was a man of encouragement. Throughout his mission journey, he cared for the children and treated them as a part of the church. He had a vision for the children as the 'future of the church and made use of every opportunity to train them in the way they should go so that they may not depart from the ways of the Lord when they become old.

Paul says in his epistle to Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have

finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day - and not only to me, but to all who crave His appearing". Yes! This verse is fully true in the case of Br. Thomas Nainan. He has fought a good fight and finished his race successfully to receive the reward from his Master. He could win many souls, encourage many people, mould many warriors for Christ and leave a legacy for the future generation - a legacy of

humbleness, discipline and commitment.

He is survived by his wife Annamma, children, Sherly, Shaila and Simon, Br. Aby & Shajan (Sons-in-law) and Jessy (daughter-in-law) and grand children. IPC Maharashtra State Council, IPC Maharashtra State Sunday School Board, 'Suvartha Family" and PYPA state council express their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. May the Lord console and strengthen them with His divine peace.