



ഇത് മടങ്ങിവരവിന്റെ കാലം

ആകാശത്തിലെ പെരുത്തൊര തന്റെ കാലം അറിയുന്നു, മീവൽപ ക്ഷിയം കൊക്കും മടങ്ങിവരവി നുള്ള സമയം അനുസരിക്കുന്നു. എന്റെ ജനമോ യഹോവയുടെ ന്യായം അറിയുന്നില്ല (യിര. 8:7).

സ്രഷ്ടാവികളേക്ക് മടങ്ങിവരുവാനുള്ള ആഹ്വാനം പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവ് എക്കാലത്തും നൽകുന്നുണ്ട്. ദൈവിക സംസർഗ്ഗത്തിൽ നിന്നും അനുസരണക്കേടു നിമിത്തം അകന്നു പോയ ഒന്നാമത്തെ മനുഷ്യൻ മുതൽ ഇന്ന് ജീവ നോടിരിക്കുന്നവർ വരെ ഈ പരിശുദ്ധാത്മ ആഹ്വാനത്തിന് വിധേയപ്പെട്ടവരാണ്.

ദൈവിക കൂട്ടായ്മയെ വീട്ട് അന്യദേവന്മാരെ ആരാധിക്കുവാൻ പോയ യിസ്രായേൽ മക്കളെ വിവിധ സാഹചര്യങ്ങളിലൂടെ ദൈവം മടക്കി വരുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. ചില രാജാക്കന്മാർ ദൈവത്തെ മറന്നപ്പോൾ ദൈവാരാധനയ്ക്കായി മറ്റു ചിലരെ ദൈവം തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തു. തന്റെ ജനത്തിന്റെ അകൃത്യം അവരെ ബോധ്യപ്പെടുത്തുവാൻ അന്യരാജാക്കന്മാരെപ്പോലും ദൈവം ഉപയോഗിച്ചതായി നാം കാണുന്നു.

മേൽപ്പറഞ്ഞ എല്ലാ സാഹചര്യങ്ങളിലും മടങ്ങിവരവിനുള്ള ആഹ്വാനത്തെ ജനം സ്വീകരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. എവിടെയെല്ലാം ഈ ആഹ്വാനത്തെ നിരസിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടോ, അവിടെയെല്ലാം ദൈവത്തിന്റെ ശിക്ഷയുടെ കരം വെളിപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്.

യിസ്രായേൽ ജനം ദൈവിക പ്രമാണങ്ങൾ ഉപേക്ഷിച്ച് സ്വന്ത നിരൂപണ പ്രകാരം ജീവിക്കുകയും, അന്യദേവന്മാരെ സേവിക്കുകയും ചെയ്ത അവസ്ഥയിൽ നിന്നും മടങ്ങിവരണമെന്നാണ് പ്രവാചകനായ യിരമ്യാവ് പ്രവചിച്ചത്. ഈ പ്രവചന ദൃതിനെ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുവാൻ അന്നത്തെ രാജാക്കന്മാർക്കോ പുരോഹിതന്മാർക്കോ കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. പ്രവാചകനായ യെശയ്യാവും ഇതിനു സമാനമായ പ്രവചനങ്ങൾ നടത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. “കാള തന്റെ ഉടയവനെയും, കഴുത തന്റെ യജമാനന്റെ പുൽത്തൊട്ടിയേയും അറിയുന്നു. യിസ്രായേലോ അറിയുന്നില്ല, എന്റെ ജനം ഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നുമില്ല” യെശ. 1:3. അവർ മത്സരിക്കളായി, അടിക്കുന്നോറും പിന്മാറുന്നവരായി നന്മ ചെയ്യുവാൻ അറിയാത്തവരായി, ദൈവപ്രസാദമില്ലാത്ത ആരാധന കഴിച്ച് പിന്മാറ്റത്തിന്റെ ഉത്തുംഗ ശ്രേണിയിൽ വിരാജിക്കുന്നതായി യെശയ്യാവ് പറയുന്നു.

“ഒരുത്തൻ വീണാൽ എഴുന്നേൽക്കയില്ലയോ? ഒരുത്തൻ വഴിതെറ്റിപ്പോയാൽ മടങ്ങി വരികയില്ലയോ? യെരൂശലേമിലെ ഈ ജനമോ ഇടവിടാതെ പിന്മാറ്റമായി പിന്മാറിയിരിക്കുന്നതും, വഞ്ചന മുറുകെ പിടിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് മടങ്ങി വരുവാൻ മനസ്സില്ലാതിരിക്കുന്നതും എന്ത്?” യിര. 8:45.

മേൽപ്രസ്താവിച്ചതിന് തികച്ചും സമാനമായ ഒരു സാഹചര്യമാണ് ഇന്നും നിലവിലുള്ളത്. നവീകരണ കാലഘട്ടത്തിന് മുമ്പ് സഭയിൽ കടന്നുകൂടിയ അനാചാരങ്ങൾക്കും അശുദ്ധിക്കും സമാനമായി ആധുനിക സഭയിലും പലവിധത്തിലുള്ള ദുരുപദേശങ്ങളും അനാചാരങ്ങളും കടന്നു കൂടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. ദൈവവചനം അനുശാസിക്കുന്നതും, സഭാപിതാക്കന്മാർ പഠിപ്പിച്ചതും മാതൃകയാക്കി തന്നതുമായ പലതും ഇന്നത്തെ തലമുറ വലിച്ചെറിഞ്ഞുകഴിഞ്ഞു.

ആധുനിക പെന്തക്കോസ്തു പ്രസ്ഥാനം ഉടലെടുത്ത് കേവലം ഒരു നൂറ്റാണ്ട് മാത്രം പിന്നിട്ടപ്പോഴേക്കും, ആദ്യകാലങ്ങളിലുണ്ടായിരുന്ന ജീവിത വിശുദ്ധിയും, കൂട്ടായ്മയുടെ ഊഷ്മളതയും നമുക്ക് അന്യമായി തീർന്നു. വചനം അനുശാസിക്കാത്ത പല നടപടി ക്രമങ്ങളും സഭയിൽ കടന്നുകൂടി. പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവിന് ഇന്നത്തെ സഭകളിൽ കാര്യമായ പ്രവർത്തന സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം ഉണ്ടോ എന്ന് സംശയിക്കുന്നു.

ദൈവവചനത്തിന് കീഴ്പ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു തലമുറയെ വാർത്തെടുക്കുവാൻ നമുക്ക് കഴിയാതെ വരുന്നു. പാപത്തെ ബലഹീനതയായി കാണുന്ന ഒരു സമൂഹമായി സഭ മാറിക്കഴിഞ്ഞു. ആദിമ കാലങ്ങളിലുണ്ടായിരുന്ന കൃപാവര ശുശ്രൂഷകൾ ഇന്ന് പഴങ്കഥകളായി മാറി. കർത്താവിന്റെ കാലത്ത് സംഭവിച്ചതുപോലെ സഭകൾ വ്യാപാര സ്ഥാപനങ്ങളും, പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളുമായി മാറി.

ദൈവജനമേ, നമുക്കൊരു മടങ്ങിവരവ് ആവശ്യമല്ലേ? ആദിമ സ്നേഹത്തിലേക്കും ഉപദേശത്തിന്റെ പവിത്രതയിലേക്കും, ജീവിത വിശുദ്ധിയിലേക്കും, കൂട്ടായ്മയുടെ ഊഷ്മളതയിലേക്കും നമുക്ക് മടങ്ങിവരാം.

ഇപ്രകാരം മടങ്ങിവരുന്നവരെ ചേർക്കുവാൻ നമ്മുടെ നാഥൻ എത്രയും വേഗം മടങ്ങിവരും. അവന്റെ വരവിനായി - നിത്യതയ്ക്കായി നമുക്കൊരുങ്ങാം. ദൈവം നമ്മെ അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ. ■



Bro. Mathews Paul

The Church of Jesus Christ: *A Business?*

Due to the powerful influence of commercialism, many churches and ministries across the world are increasingly looking like businesses. The language of business is replacing biblical and theological vocabulary at a very fast pace. Market share, marketing, public relations, needs analysis, customer satisfaction, environmental scanning, strategic plan, change management, efficiency, and so forth, are replacing evangelism, discipleship, compassion, Christian education, faith promise, caring, and the like, in many churches. These concepts did not arrive from major theological institutions, but from the best business schools of the world, particularly in the United States of America. A similar change in church vocabulary took place a generation ago when psychology made its way into the churches and provided an additional model of pastoral ministry and image of pastor as therapist. [I was in the divinity school when it happened and must confess that it was not all bad once some corrections took place.]

Many of today's business concepts are important and can certainly contribute to the efficient running of the organizational aspects of the community of faith. They can assist in running the organization in a businesslike fashion. The problem is that the border between business and businesslike is disappearing in many places. I am not claiming that some unscrupulous people are causing this problem. Actually, it is the result of good people with very good intentions applying business concepts to the body of Christ without serious biblical and theological reflection. They are simply adapting good business principles and practices without "baptizing them."

Here's the problem: The church is not simply an organization; it is primarily a living organism. The Bible does not dwell on the organizational aspects of the church; instead, it uses familial language to describe the church. The church is the family of God, the community of faith, the body of Christ, and the household of faith. A family is not about bottom line. It is about relationships and stewardship. It is a place of sacrifices and nurturing, not profit, profit-sharing, customer satisfaction, and normal concepts of return on investment.

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Please don't misunderstand me. The church has always been involved with the marketplace. Marketplace can be a context of ministry and a contributor to ministry. The role of the marketplace in advancing the Kingdom of God cannot be minimized. From the Book of Acts all the way to the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship, history tells us about the potential and positive impact of the marketplace in advancing the Kingdom of God.

However, the church is not simply a business. The difference between business and businesslike must be preserved in the context of the church of Jesus Christ and its ministries.

Three business concepts have contributed to the confusion in this regard—leadership, change, and efficiency. These can be called three obsessions. The assumption is that everyone must be a leader, all changes are good and needed, and efficiency is the highest value in all situations. Let's briefly review these concepts.

Leadership: It seems everyone is talking about leadership. There are so many books available on this subject. Seminars and



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Yes, the Bible talks about shepherds, elders, presbyters, et al., much more than about leaders. The word “leader” appears only very few times in the Bible. We are advised to remember our leaders and to imitate their faith, but the word of God is not obsessed with the idea of leadership.

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conferences on the topic of leadership are available in every imaginable field. The truth is that the Bible says very little about leadership as this concept is understood in today’s society. The scripture talks much more about followership!

Yes, the Bible talks about shepherds, elders, presbyters, et al., much more than about leaders. The word “leader” appears only very few times in the Bible. We are advised to remember our leaders and to imitate their faith, but the word of God is not obsessed with the idea of leadership. Biblical advice is more about following. We are called to follow Jesus. We are to take up the cross and follow Christ. The emphasis in the modern concept of leadership is on the leader. The focus of biblical leadership is on the people who follow. Biblical leaders are those who feed and care. Nurturing is the main work of biblical leaders—not bossing around others. In fact, Jesus said it should not be so among His followers.

God anoints certain people to lead others, but the spirit in which they lead is not arrogance; it is service. In the Kingdom of God, leaders are servants and followers at the same time. Biblical leaders can require others to follow them only as they follow Christ. Not everyone should be a leader in the body of Christ. It is OK to be a follower in the family of God.

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Change is the second concept. Nothing is ever good enough. Things must change for the sake of change alone.

Certainly there are things in life and ministry that need to change. I am not denying that some things in church and society must change.

But the idea that constant change is what is needed in all situations is not right. Some changes are unnecessary and unprofitable. Some things should be left alone. Change is not a prerequisite for happiness or profit. Change the things that need to be changed. Don’t repair unbroken things. This is especially true about relationships and values.

Efficiency is the third concept. Of course, efficiency is a good thing, but there are higher values than efficiency in some situations. A grandmother may not be the most efficient member of the family, but do you want to replace her? Tithing may not be the most efficient financial management by some measures, but do you want to stop giving to God? Raising children is not the most efficient way to spend money, but do you want to disown your children? No, certainly not. Efficiency is important, but sometimes there are other values that are

more important. Relationships matter. Sometimes ministry is inefficient. You may keep a particular ministry open a little longer for biblical reasons. This is consistent with Kingdom principles.

So what is the bottom line? The church is not a business, but its organizational aspects must be run like a business. Many churches and ministries are guilty of sloppy and sometimes illegal operations and business practices. Applying excellent business practices to the organizational parts of the church is good Christian stewardship, but great caution must be taken not to blur the lines

between the life and mission of the body of Christ and its operational responsibilities. The church of Jesus Christ in the world today is both an organism and an

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FELLOWSHIP:

The Sign of Spiritual Alignment

Contemporary Christianity, especially Pentecostalism gradually is losing the sweet togetherness of fellowship. This is the common cry of the people in our community. Although it is the outcry, nobody takes it as very serious. Moreover, nobody makes any efforts to restore the life pattern of olden days. This is the grave mistake that we can see among us today. The so called spirituality is most of the time like a mask to show others. The modern churches are filled with these kind of people. At the same time they have praise and worship, exhortations, testimonies, Lord's table and other meetings. But what is being lost today is the reality of the strength of fellowship. When a community loses its taste of togetherness, it is doubtless under a dangerous situation. People are merely satisfied with outward acts and never make an effort to have a deep and meaningful personal relationship. So, its outcome is superficial Christianity and individualism. Therefore personal intentions and selfish motives conquer the spiritual realm and people attend the church activities artificially. In such an existing situation we need to think seriously about the renewal of fellowship.

The word fellowship in our Bible is taken from a strong Greek word, *'koinonia'*, which means fellowship, association, sharing and participation. Book of Acts depicts the sweetness of *koinonia* in high value (Acts 4:32-37; Cf. Rom. 15:26, 2 Cor. 6:14, 8:4, 9:13). The idea of fellowship is not just a life style of first century Christians but they considered it as an apostolic doctrine (Acts 2:42) and they did abide in it. The foundation of Christianity is the bond between the spiritual people and the communion and the sincere communication. Today what we lost is this alignment from our

churches. We just talk to others not from our heart or we purposefully choose people who are at our same level. We have no time to spare for others and shamelessly became selfish by holding the Bible in our hands!! We often make our own zones of comforts and pleasures and never remember those who are in distress and need. Nevertheless, we attend the church with zeal and zest and share holy communion but have no spiritual communication with others. Now, more are on the high mountain of personal

pleasures and not ready to come down to the valley where so many are in pain and panic. The church slowly forgets her duty and involves in secondary matters.

The **'BODY'** metaphor – a symbol of **'Fellowship'**:

It is indeed true that the composition of the body is the right metaphor to explain the alignment between its members or organs. This is why Paul emphatically portrayed and compared the church with human anatomy. The human body is not just a mechanical component but rather a living organism. This is same with the Church of God. The Church as a

mystery is the Body of Christ and discloses the great truth, that is, fellowship. The Body of Christ is not merely a collection of cells, but the center of togetherness of different personalities, somebody rightly commented. The idea of Christ as the Head and the believers as His body is not just a theological concept, but it expresses the pleasant relationship between the loving God and human beings. This mysterious relation shows the superb picture of the fellowship and unity in the body.

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It is in this fellowship of the eternal life that we all connect to each other and participate in all that the Father and Son have done for us.

Fellowship here also indicates the need to cast away all our private issues and self interests and join with fellow beings for a certain common purpose.

Fellowship in prayer, worship, giving, sharing and communication are to be reinstated in our church urgently.

These days, fellowship and personal relationship are confined to a mere shake hand and members are not ready to enter into a warm spiritual experience. Everyone feels self-dependant, which is really an alarming situation and a threat to the organic nature of the church.

Apostle John in his first epistle beautifully describes the deep meaning of fellowship in ch. 1:3. It says: "*--- that you may have fellowship with us and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ*". This fellowship is the outcome of the life of Christ in us and all genuine believers are part of this flow of life. It is in this fellowship of the eternal life that we all connect to each other and participate in all that the Father and Son have done for us. By virtue of this fellowship, we are enjoying grace and love with the Lord and each other. Therefore having fellowship with each other is not to be taken as a silly matter, but rather it is of higher value and of serious nature. In order to make it a practical truth God the Father spent a priceless value, that is the very life of His Son.

Fellowship here also indicates the need to cast away all our private issues and self interests and join with fellow beings for a certain common purpose. It was the practice of the early church (Acts 4:32-33). Sharing our resources with others who are in daily needs is the real mark of this kind of fellowship (2 Cor. 8:14-15). This shows our concern and care to the fellow beings. But many today have minimized fellowship with others to making just a prayer. Even that is slowly disappearing from our community. We must recognize that every one is sharing the same grace and salvation plan of God in the divine economy. How then, can we deliberately ignore others when they are really in the need, pain and distress? How can we close our eyes against them as if we are at some higher level?

We deliberately forget the redemptive blood of Christ that was shed for everyone irrespective of their conditions of life and begin to see others through materialistic eyes. It is doubtless that materialism has become the standard today to have acquaintance and relation with each other

in many of the churches. As a result, even the presence of Jesus our Lord is disappearing from the church. Unfortunately we never realize it and walk ahead like the parents of Jesus who left the temple assuming that Boy Jesus is with them. We elevate the material blessings more than any other things in our testimonies and sermons and make the church as a commercial center and also present God as an entrepreneur! We bring up a money- minded generation in our families and proclaim that material richness is the biggest thing in the world. We often teach them about self motives and self dependency

and eventually they become selfish persons. Hence, no one is concerned about fellowship and eternity but only think about the life on earth. The church is just an address for them. Modern generation is therefore not serious about the church and the fellowship that it offers. They love more the corporate living and give importance to the social gathering than spiritual gathering. As a consequence, the church is losing the fabric of spirituality in fellowship and personal relationship. Thus we are breaking the apostolic doctrine and become offenders before the Lord.

This fellowship is the outcome of the life of Christ in us and all genuine believers are part of this flow of life. It is in this fellowship of the eternal life that we all are connected each other and participate in all that the Father and Son have done for us.

By virtue of this fellowship, we are enjoying grace and love with the Lord and each other.

Truly, we need to realize our fault and restore us into the biblical life pattern. Fellowship in prayer, worship, giving, sharing and communication are to be reinstated in our church urgently. We cannot turn our faces away from the fellow citizens as if we are not of this world. We see the meaning, purpose, value and glory of fellowship in Jesus Christ. If we consider Him as the Saviour of our souls we should not despise the issue of fellowship. As we all have been saved and purchased by His blood, we have no authority to differentiate our co-believers based on certain values. Every member is one in Christ and the strength of fellowship is our strength of unity. Let us enjoy this spirit of togetherness with the Triune God and between redeemed ones. We are one body and we have only one Saviour and He is having only one church, that is His glorious Body. Let us not lose this spiritual alignment that is divinely ordained and entrusted to us. AMEN. ■

Seek God's face *alone* - For *clear* directions!

**New Series:
Meditations from
"Galatians" - 1**

"But I make known to you, brethren that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus." (Gal. 1:11-12, 15-17)

Apostle Paul is unique among all the other eleven core apostles of Jesus Christ for many reasons: one, he was the only apostle who was not among the initial twelve apostle having replaced Judas Iscariot who killed himself after betraying Jesus (v. 1); two, he was the only apostle whom



Jesus called through a vision and not in person (Acts 9:4-6); three, he was the only apostle who was an educated Pharisee and a Roman citizen (Acts 23:6); four, he was the only apostle who was chosen specifically to minister among the Gentiles (v. 15; Acts 9:15); and five, he was the only apostle who directly received the gospel through the revelation of Jesus Christ (v. 12).

After his dramatic conversion, Apostle Paul changed his life vocation from being a persecutor of the Christians to become a dynamic preacher of the gospel (v. 23). In the above passage, Paul clarified the source of his gospel message to convince his readers that the gospel he had preached to them was the true gospel and what the false teachers were presenting was heresy. Both his gospel and his commission to preach it came directly from Jesus Christ on the Damascus Road (vv. 15-16). He did not receive it from traditional sources (e.g. his teacher Gamaliel: Acts 5:34; 22:3) nor did he learn it through traditional means (his formal education). Since his calling had been supernatural, Paul did not need to consult with other people or even seek directions from other apostles regarding his ministry. His authority came from God alone; and later the Jerusalem apostles merely confirmed it.

Paul actually traveled to the deserts of Arabia where he spent about three years in prayer and meditating on God's Word in light to the revelation that he had received (v. 17). God removed the veil from his eyes and revealed many truths to Paul directly. God gave him clear directions concerning

some basic elements of Christianity, which are evident in his epistle to the Galatians. These include the need to avoid legalism, the need to avoid self-effort, the need to avoid exchanging grace for a different gospel, about not trying to please God through own efforts, and about not trying to develop

spiritually through own strength. Instead, what God had taught Paul was to totally depend on God and seek His face alone for clear directions through the work of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 26:12-18). At least a portion of these truths which God revealed to Paul has been preserved for the churches in his epistle writings that are so important for our lives as well today.

Apostle Paul's story gives us a wonderful view of God's purpose in calling us as well, and this is to reveal His Son in us so that we may represent out Lord Jesus to the world. He reveals Christ to our hearts (v. 16) in order that He may display Christ in and through us to the world (vv. 16-23) and that God may be glorified through this display (v. 24). In this day and age when there is so much liberal theology and dilution of the gospel, we need to faithfully study the scriptures rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15) so that we can detect the toxins of false teachings and proclaim the truth of God's wonderful salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone. We need to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in all walks of our lives. Let us seek God's face alone for clear directions!

"The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God." (Psalms 14:2). *"When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, Lord, I will seek.'"* (Psalms 27:8) *"Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."* (Jer. 29:12-13) ■



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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 15 -

'Doctrinal or Theological Study' Method

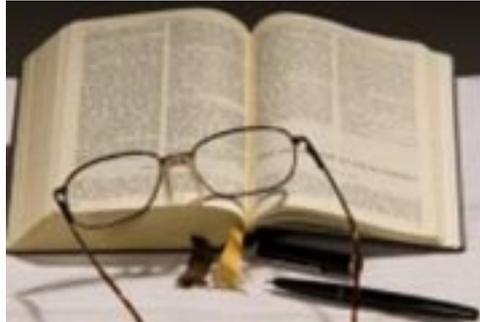


Dr. C.P. Varghese

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

True Christianity is not a religion, but is the relationship between the one and only true God and mankind through the God-Man Jesus Christ. It is the life that is taught in the Bible.

This is studying the major doctrines of the Bible that are so fundamental for Christian life. The English word Doctrine comes from the Greek word, Didaskalia or Latin word, Doctrina meaning "instruction" or "teaching". The word theology is a combination of two Greek words, theos meaning "God", and ology meaning "study" from the Greek word, logos. According to a great theologian of the twentieth century, A. H. Strong, "Theology is the science of God and of the relations between God and the universe." The study of God is called Theology proper.



names? How does this apply to my relationship with God? (For example, Genesis 22:14 – Jehovah Jireh, which means "God who Provides")

Some Bible Study Tools

There are many books available in the English language for the correct

study of Theology or doctrines, and there are many books that are false teachings on this subject. So you need a good study Bible, Bible Concordance, Bible dictionary, a one volume Bible commentary and a Bible handbook. Before you go and buy them please ask your pastor and or one of the editors of this magazine.

If you are a young person just graduated from High School or college, regardless of the kind of work or vocation you believe God wants you to be in, dedicate a minimum of one year to go and study in a good Bible College or seminary.

If you are already employed during the day time find out about evening Bible classes that you may be able to attend. Regardless of your work schedule you can study through distance education, or correspondence courses. If you are retired please go and study in a Bible College. If you are retired and married, there are a few Bible colleges where you can go and live and study with your husband and/or wife.

God wants you not only to have a personal relationship with him, but he wants you to grow deeper in your relationship, and know Him better. He wants you to share the message of His love and grace, and his wonderful plan of salvation for all those who put their trust and faith in his son Jesus Christ. How shall the lost people hear and know of the only great and savior Jesus Christ if you and I do not study and share the Gospel? (Rom. 10:14-15) ■

True Christianity is not a religion, but is the relationship between the one and only true God and mankind through the God-Man Jesus Christ. It is the life that is taught in the Bible. In the writings of Apostle Paul to Timothy and Titus, Paul wrote about the importance of right doctrine about twenty times. There are so many false teachings or doctrines, so it is very important that we study the correct teachings of the Word of God. (See 1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1:8; 1 Tim. 6:3; 2 Tim. 1: 13,14; 1 John 2:7).

Study only one doctrine at a time such as the doctrine of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, the Church and so on. Let us look at studying the doctrine of God for example. Since this study is so broad you need to narrow it down and ask the right questions and find the answers in the Bible. Also you may want to limit this study to one book of the Bible. What are the names of God found in the book of Genesis? Do these names have meaning? What are the compound names of God found in the book of Genesis? Is there any meaning associated with these compound names? If so what does it mean? Who are the people and what are the events associated with these

When Jericho fell!

Beyond the Jordan, lay a great city,
The home of wickedness and pride;
But lo! ruin was hailing at its side,
Who knew, the Great Wall of Jericho would fall?

The Wall in Jericho was a rarest view,
Raised up by Canaan's most skilled hands.
So majestic with worthy might still stands,
An emblem of Pride on History's crooked bench!

Jericho was the glory of its time!
Between the walls, it lay secured;
Trade and business was well nurtured,
But Time and Terror had a treaty signed!

A Flock from Egypt had set out free,
Before them, the Jordan made way,
And they crossed over with lively gay;
The men of Israel, the Clans of Jacob.

Fearless, they hailed to Jericho!
For Fate had written to their name,
The great city with all its fame.
They heard, they hoped, they believed!

Around the city, marched men armed;
One time each day, with healthy primes.
And on the seventh day, marched they sev'n
times,
With blowing trumpets, they shouted loud !



Asher John
College Student
Mumbai

At their insanity, Jericho mocked!
Why, O Rahab, you betrayed your land;
And lend the spies a helping hand?
With the scarlet cloak on your window pane!

Men and women, and all of Jericho
Looked down in awe as the trumpets blew;
A sudden fear, o'er Jericho grew,
And a crack on the wall, that rattled through!

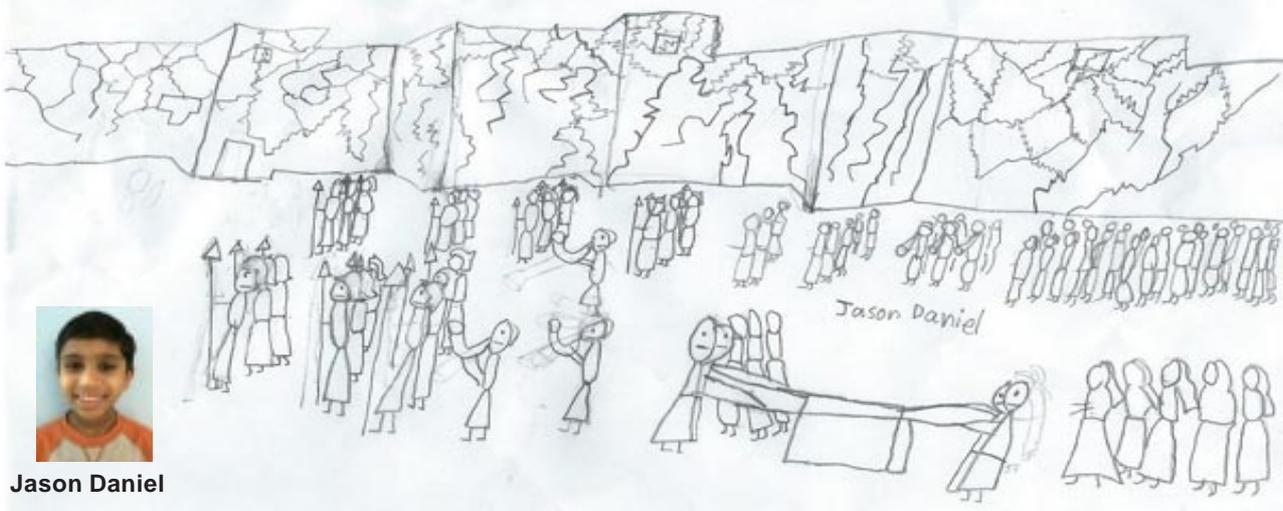
Jericho, like a pack of cards, came tumbling
down,
It tore down like a papyrus sheet,
Or in threshold like scattered wheat,
The beauty, the pride and all that ponders!

Jericho's mourning was Heaven's mirth,
The Divine choir raised an august hymn,
"Lays Great Jericho with glory dim,
All splendor rubbed with Canaan's dust."

Among the dead, were men and beasts,
The rich, and poor, the mighty, and less;
All struck down like a shrewd play of Chess.
The fall of Jericho in History nailed!

Now in cold waters, the city lay;
Will Jericho ever rise again ?
Seems a tale in a desert lane;
The Wonder that struck, when Jericho fell!

"Israel outside the cracking wall of Jericho"



Jason Daniel



&
JKS



Indonesia's "religious harmony" law works against Christians!

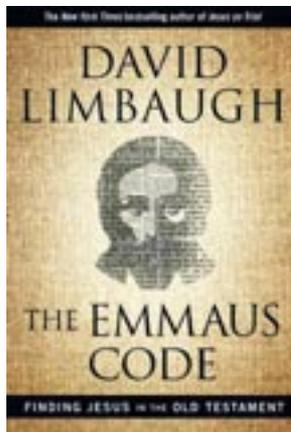
The "religious harmony" law, passed by Indonesia in 2006, requires Christian groups to get 60 signatures of approval from Christians and 90 signatures from other faiths before building a church. When the law is enforced, it makes way for the majority, mostly Muslim hardliners, to pressure the government to close down churches. Needless to mention that it will be physically impossible to fulfil the requirement of getting approvals of 90 people from other faiths. Hence it will be a stupendous task to construct a new church building.

According to a report, 80 percent of the existing houses of worship in Indonesia do not have permits. In such a scenario, what will happen to them is anybody's guess!

The Emmaus Code

David Limbaugh's latest book, "The Emmaus Code: Finding Jesus in the Old Testament", thoroughly unlocks the mysteries of the Old Testament and reveals hints of Jesus Christ's arrival through all thirty-nine Old Testament books. In his earlier work, "Jesus on Trial" which became "New York Times" best-seller in 2014, he made a case for the Gospels as hard evidence of the existence of God, drawing on his own spiritual journey from skeptic to believer.

Limbaugh takes the encounter between the risen Jesus and two travelers on the road to Emmaus as the key passage and deftly guides the reader to a new understanding of the Old Testament as a clear and powerful heralding of Jesus Christ's arrival. Limbaugh takes readers on a revealing journey from Genesis through Malachi, demonstrating that a consistent message runs through every one of the Old Testament's thirty-nine books: The



book's message is that Christianity and Judaism are not competing religions at odds with one another. The author succeeds in proving that Christianity represents the final culmination of Judaism, and Christ's incarnation, death and resurrection are the fulfillment of the long awaited Jewish Messiah prophesied throughout the Old Testament.

David Limbaugh writes: "My new book is the culmination of a project I began some 20 years ago. In the book, I try to demonstrate that the Christ-centeredness of the Old Testament is the key to understanding all of Scripture. The book is a primer on the Old Testament. I take you through each period of Old Testament history, introduce and discuss all the threads and themes pointing to Jesus in the Old Testament, and finally give you an overview of each book of the Old Testament and detail how each one prefigures Jesus Christ".

C.S. Lewis wrote many years ago: "I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Jesus: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic or else he would be the Devil of Hell".

Limbaugh's book is available from Amazon.

Royal seal of King Hezekiah

Eilat Mazar, an archaeologist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who led a scientific archaeological excavation declared that the royal seal of King Hezekiah who ruled the kingdom of Judea from 727 B.C. to 698 B.C. was unearthed in a trash heap near the walls of the ancient Temple Mount. The seal, a

clay impression depicting a two-winged sun on either side, was once used to seal papyrus documents.



Hezekiah Seal

The team found the seal while sifting through archaeological remains from a trash heap found outside what was once the Royal Building, essentially the food pantry for the ancient kingdom. The seal bore the inscription: "Belonging to Hezekiah, (son of) Ahaz, king of Judah". Hezekiah is one of the most famous of the Israelite kings. During his reign, he rooted out idol worship, spruced up the decrepit temple and centralized power. The winged-sun imagery represented the protection and refuge of God. His reign is also one of the best documented by nonbiblical sources. The chronicles of the Assyrian kings Sargon II and Sennacherib, who laid siege to Jerusalem, describe the Israelite ruler paying tribute to them to stop attacks. The Assyrians laid siege to Jerusalem but did not attack the Judean kingdom in Hezekiah's lifetime, according to the Assyrian chronicles.

'Magdala Stone'

A block of stone was unearthed near the Sea of Galilee in northern Israel. The site is presumed to be the hometown of Mary Magdalene and hence the stone has been named 'Magdala Stone'. The digging also revealed an ancient marketplace and fishermen's quarters along with a synagogue. Experts have raised the possibility that Jesus may have

Poem

My Great GOD

Oh God you are my shepherd
You gave me my life
You saved me
You took care of me
You wiped out my tears
You overlooked my sins
You hid my sins in your blood.

Oh marvelous God! Oh wonderful God!
You can't be compared with another
No one but you
You sent your only son JESUS
To make Him the First born
And to make me the next heir.

I can't move without your grace Oh Lord.
I need your presence always
Fill me with your Holy Spirit Oh Lord!
So as to enjoy your presence and your love



Mrs. Mary Mathew
Mulund

Fill me with that heavenly joy
I know I have no time to waste
Let me win many to be your own

I need your anointment Oh Lord!
Make me holy as you are
Fill me with your love Oh Lord!
Keep me strong, keep me loving, keep me
clean

Give me the grace to be closer to you

Make me your disciple Oh Lord!
Help me deny myself
Help me to be obedient Oh Lord!
Help me grow step by step
Till I reach that maturity you prefer
So that I can enjoy with you always
in that Holy Land forever.
Amen!

News & Views Continuation from previous page

taught in the synagogue when he was in Galilee. A local coin found in a side room was minted in AD 29, when Jesus is thought to have been alive.



'Magdala Stone', about the size of an occasional table, looks like a three-dimensional depiction of the Temple of Herod, including its most sacred Holy of Holies. According to Prof. Talgam, an expert in archaeology, there are more signs of the Temple to be seen on the stone. Sacred utensils are depicted in the order in which they would have appeared. A square shape may represent the sacrificial altar, with large oil and water containers shown on either side. The 12-leaf rosette on top of the stone might have echoed a motif on the veil that divided the Temple's main sanctuary from the Holy of Holies.

Before Herod's Temple was destroyed in AD 70, synagogues were used as a general place of assembly and learning, something like a neighborhood community center. The Magdala Stone was found in the center of the old synagogue, and it might have been intended to give the space an aura of holiness. The Magdala Stone is about the right size for laying down a Torah scroll, so it might have been used as furniture,

Discoveries like the 'Hezekiah Seal' and 'Magdala Stone' unearthed through archaeological excavations are confirming the historical correctness of biblical accounts. It is difficult to imagine that there are still people who doubt the genuineness of the scriptures!

Christians in UK, a minority?

Anglican Bishop of London, Richard Chartres and Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols met recently in London to discuss the issue of declining Christian faith in UK. They concluded that Christians are now a "significant minority" in Britain, and that this applies to both Protestants and Catholics. Church of England attendance has dropped to less than one million per

week. This means that only 1.4 percent of the population is attending Anglican services. The church reportedly loses about one percent of its attendees every year.

How sad it is to know that Christians have become a minority community in Britain which was once known as a Christian nation! Quite possibly the reason for this sorry situation is that the church has failed to fulfill its mission of providing spiritual leadership and shining like a beacon of light in the world. People are forced to go elsewhere to seek solace and satisfy their spiritual hunger!

Quotable quotes from Rev. A.W. Tozer

"But the sons of this world have not God; they have only each other, and they walk holding to each other and looking to one another for assurance like frightened children"

"We need never shout across the spaces to an absent God. He is nearer than our own soul, closer than our most secret thoughts"



Under His wings, you will find refuge!

This is an interesting story which explains God's protection. After a forest fire in a high mountain, the forest rangers began their trek up the mountain to assess the damage.

One ranger found a bird lying in ashes on the ground at the base of a tree. The ranger knocked the bird over with a stick. Three tiny chicks ran out from under their dead mother's wings.

The ranger was amazed to realize that the loving mother, had carried her offsprings to the base of the tree and had gathered them under her wings, as she was aware of the impending danger. Covering her wings over her chicks she protected

them from the toxic smoke which arose with the flame. She could have flown to safety but had refused to abandon her babies. The heat from the fire burned her body and the toxic smoke killed her. She was willing to die so that her chicks would live under the cover of her wings.

"He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge." (Psalms 91:4)

We can compare this story with the great sacrifice of Jesus for the our

redemption. Also this incident opens our eyes into God's protection. Bible says, He will never leave us nor forsake us. Therefore we should have no worries when disasters or calamities strike us because God is our refuge. We can join with the psalmist and say that, 'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging' (Psalms 46:1-3).

So dear friends, when troubles or problems arise do not worry or be afraid as God has promised His protection over our lives. God is with us through thick and thin.

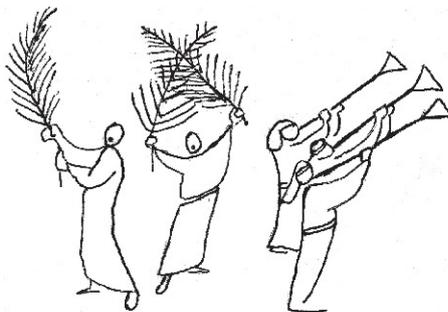


Juby Anoop, UK

Let us praise God's glory together



Pheba Susan Sam
Kerala



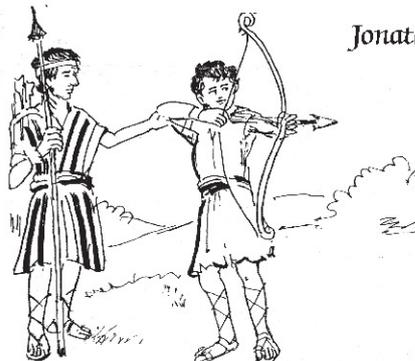
Pouring perfume at the feet of Jesus



Rufos Roymon
Bahrain



Joseph was
thrown
in to well



Jonathan and David



Banage P.K.

India Bible College and Seminary receives Serampore University Affiliation

India Bible College and Seminary (IBC) has received affiliation with Serampore University from the new academic year beginning in April 2016. Serampore University accreditation is a very significant milestone in the history of IBC. It raises its status in the eyes of the India government and opens possibilities for future growth in new and strategic ways.

IBC offers a total of eight under-

graduate and graduate level degree programs.

IBC also received accreditation from Asia Theological Association (ATA) in the year 2000. All the ATA-accredited programs will continue. IBC has trained and sent over 14,000 leaders to preach Christ and reach the unreached. Hundreds of students are trained each year from all over India and neighboring countries,

representing 34 languages.

Today, IBC functions on two separate campuses, one known as Hebron Campus for Malayalam medium classes located in Kumbanad, and a larger 38 acre campus known as IGO Campus for English medium classes, located nearby in Kozhimala. The two campuses have more than 55 well-experienced and highly qualified faculty members.



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EVENING CLASSES

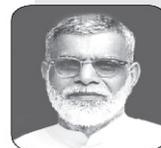
This training is in 10 week modules offered three terms a year leading to a Certificate in Biblical Studies for lay persons.

For more details contact

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