

ISSUE
02

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LIGHT

Jesus: "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12)

**ONE HEART
AND A NEW SPIRIT**

GO *YE THEREFORE*

**I WILL FILL THIS HOUSE WITH
GLORY**

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BEHOLD, THE NEW HAS COME



Everybody needs a second chance. These were my thoughts few moments before I became a new creation in Christ. I wanted to make things right and wanted a second chance. I looked at all possible avenues made available through the religions of this world. It did not take me long to realize that there were very few options if at all none. I was then reminded by the Spirit of God (that I did not know at the time it was Him) that “this Jesus” died for my sins and by accepting this I would become new. I simply believed this with all my heart as I was desperate to leave behind my sinful life and start all over again.

2 Corinthians 5:17 states that “anyone in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come.

We must understand and live out “this” difference that Paul speaks of in this verse. The old life we lead, is now in the past. The Lord tells us that in Isaiah 43: 25 that He will not

remember our sins. In fact as much as the Lord has said He would no longer remember our old sinful life, we ourselves need to leave behind and “forget” our past life. This is easier said than done. However, if we look back at verse 15 (2 Corinthians 5:15) , Paul states that the “Lord Jesus died for ALL , that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him, who for their sake died and was raised. The desires of our heart NOW would be to live for Him and not for ourselves.

Our hearts should be ready to live for Him – the one who died for us – then we begin to experience and enjoy “The new life”. Then our hearts would say “The new has come”. We are now a new creation, with a new direction, a new purpose. Life has new meaning, we know now that we live to please the one who gave it all.

I experienced this new life at the age of 21. I had only one objective in life then and even now, that is to please my savior the Lord Jesus Christ.

This meant that in everything I did I put CHRIST, FIRST. It was of course a journey and I had to learn how to do this every day. With my earthly father demanding me to deny Christ, I had to learn to choose my heavenly Father over my earthly father even if it meant that I lost my birth right and inheritance. At that time denying my father's request was not the easiest task assigned to me by the Lord, but as 2 Corinthians 5:15 explains I knew that I live for Christ and not for myself.

I had no clue at that time that the Lord very graciously had planned to save my paternal father too years later. The Lord was the upholder of my life (Psalm 54:4) during these trying times, His Love and peace was more real to me than anything that existed at that time.

It is important as we enter in to this new life we keep in mind that our Saviour wanted us to deny ourselves and carry the cross (Matthew 16: 24). New life in Christ does not mean that we would be living on a bed of roses. In fact the Lord tells us that when we follow Him there will be enmity between yourself and the world (including your family, your close friends and your loved ones).

We need to keep our eyes on our final goal the Lord Jesus and run the race, believing that His goodness and Mercy will surely follow us (Psalm 23:6). I faced wickedness, and went

through a difficult time at my work place during 2016/17. My first instinct was to quit my job, not trusting in the God that promises equity and justice. However, in no time the Spirit of God through His word reminded me that God IS the righteous Judge and He will always put things right. In Psalm 37: 28 we are reminded of this truth, "For the Lord loves justice, he will not forsake his saints, they are preserved forever, but the children of the wicked shall be cut off".

The Lord gave me justice at work. I was forever sure that He was faithful and He would deliver me out of the hand of the wicked. During these trying times, the Lord also taught me to patiently wait and trust Him.

I placed my trust in Him, knowing that my purpose in life is not to gain wealth, position and fame but to live for Him. Matthew 16:26 says What will it profit man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? I seek every opportunity at work to tell of Christ and His work on the cross. I seek every opportunity at work to encourage those who need encouragement and show the love of Christ. I seek every opportunity at work to give glory to Him. This is what we are called to do. This is The New Life. To be the Salt of the world and the Light of the world for the sake of His name. Amen.

- Natali Ratwatte -

THE LIGHT SHINES IN DARKNESS

(JOHN 1:5)

The Lord Jesus said **“I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12)**. In this great statement the Lord Jesus referred to DARKNESS that people without the knowledge of Him are living in. This darkness can be explained as darkness of SIN, SUPERSTITION and IGNORANCE. When we look at the world today there are things that keep people away from the true light of God. That is the knowledge of the Son of God through whom one could be saved from eternal condemnation. We are going to discuss 7 of such things that keep man away from the true way of Salvation.

Atheism - Philosophy of death Psalm 14:1

Atheism is the denial of the existence of God. There are several prominent men in the world today who are known to be Atheists. They have convinced themselves that there is no God. They are trying to propagate this idea using their earthly qualifications. They mostly attack the Bible in their public speeches and try to discredit Christian preachers and leaders. There are public debates in higher schools of learning between atheists and Christian apologists.

If Atheism were to be proved true, you will have to believe the following also:

1. There is no one to set standard of right and wrong. No one is there to set the rules – Ecclesiastes 12:14
2. Man is not answerable to anybody for his actions – Ecclesiastes 11:9
3. There is nothing called sin (Murder, Abortion, Use of drugs, Suicide, Euthanasia, Pornography or any other such thing is not sin) – Numbers 32:23, Romans 3:23
4. There is nothing called temptation and no one called the devil – 1 Peter 5:8
5. There is no place called heaven and hell – Isaiah 5:14, 14:9
6. Man has no spirit and is no eternal being and is equal to an animal – Revelation 20:12
7. This world has no meaning and purpose just come into being by chance and will end by chance – Revelation 21:3, 2 Timothy 1:9

There was a well-known French atheist of the 18th century by the name of Voltaire. He made prediction that a copy of the Bible will not be found anywhere in the world in 100 years and Christianity will be a thing of the past. After he died the Geneva Bible society bought his large house in

Southern France and converted it into a Bible printing press. At his death his nurse said “for all the wealth of Europe, I would not want to see another atheist die”. His death was so horrible and frightening. He was calling upon God but had no peace.

There is another well-known atheist by the name of Richard Dawkin in England still alive who is spending his money to advertise on buses that there is no God or God is dead. He was in public debate with a well-known Christian leader Giles Fraser over the Radio. Richard Dawkin was harping on the idea that the Christians don't know what the Bible says and would not know even the books of the Bible. Giles asked one question. Do you know the full title of your guide book by Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*?

Richard could not remember the full title and struggled and said “Oh my God”! The full title of Darwin's work “*On the origin of species*” is: “*On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*”

God's answer to this lie is found in Proverb 14:1.

Theory of evolution – The Widely believed lie – Genesis 1

Many of us if we are not science students think that theory of evolution means the idea of man evolving from an ape. Nothing is farther from the truth. Darwin's book “*On the origin of species by means of natural selection*” has the idea clearly mentioned. So what is the theory?

Darwin's theory of evolution is the widely believed notion that all forms of life are related to each other and all have a common ancestor. So we are related to Banana, and pigs etc. Once upon a time you were a Banana. Before you became man you were a Bandakka or cucumber or an onion and before you became man you were a pig or a frog or a dog etc.

This is what the theory implies. This is such an absurd theory but still embraced by so many because their minds have been corrupted by the devil. They cannot think straight now. The virus of sin has spread through the mind. But you must know that scientifically this theory is now a theory in crisis.

Because of the advancement in the field of Molecular Biology, Biochemistry and the study of Genetics many questions are now coming up. The idea of Evolution is now up against many fields of proven science.

Simple arguments against theory of evolution:

1. It is against the 1st and 2nd laws of thermodynamics.
2. Evolution has no answer to the origin of life but keeps on assuming things.
3. “Millions of years” theory is falling apart.
4. Missing link remains a missing link
5. Evolution has no answer to Male and Female difference.
6. Mutation of cells is always harmful and cannot subscribe to being a better living form.
7. All the species of life forms are living together side by side today.

God's answer is found in Genesis 1. He has given the rule governing all changes that can take place. Can you see the phrase "after his kind" in Vs. 11, 12, 21, 24? This is the rule. Any changes could take place only within the family and never across the boundary. "Let God be true and every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

Astrology – Darkness of Superstition Psalm 19:1

Not to be confused with Astronomy, which is a scientific study of the position of celestial bodies. Astrology is the study of the movements and positions of celestial objects as a means of divining information about human affairs. It is pseudoscience. There is no proven evidence that the stars and their position could control or divine human affairs. Still millions of people believe in it. Astrology is deeply into dark superstition. Have nothing to do with it. Astrology says that when a man dies, he becomes a star in distant galaxy.

We live in a beautiful universe. There are billions of stars. Unnumbered galaxies of stars. God called Abraham and told him to count the stars. Our tiny planet is placed in a small solar system which in the galaxy called the Milky Way. There are millions of such galaxies. The distances are measured in Light Years and not in miles. The closest star which is "Proxima Centauri" is 4.2 light years away from us. That is the distance you may cover when you travel non-stop at a speed of 186,000 miles per second for 4.2 years. These distances are unimaginable. The farthest man has seen is just only the beginning. There is much more. So

this is God's answer. There are two basic reasons for the universe and the heavenly bodies that we could see out there.

To declare the glory of God – Psalm 19:1

To divide the day from night and for signs, for seasons and for days and years – Genesis 1:14

Religious and Political ideologies of the World – The ways of man Proverbs 14:12

Babylon became the fountain head of all religions is clear from the scriptures. The devil tells man that he is wise and could find his own way of salvation without the help of God. Look at the religions that man has invented.

Hinduism is made up of so many ideas and beliefs that it is quite difficult to give a definition. It has so many gods, as much as 330 million. Only a few are prominently talked about. Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, Shiva the destroyer, then there is Ganesh - Shiva's son, Lakshmi – Vishnu's wife, then Kali, Rama, Hanuman the monkey god.

Hindu scriptures are numerous – Veda, Upanishads, Ramayan, Mahabharata (Bagwatgeetha is part of it) and Purana. Please see the extent of the corruption by the devil. It is a very complicated religion. Close to a billion of people are trapped in this belief. They are told that one day your soul will reach Moksha or Mukthi that is liberation of the soul from the wheel of karma that is endless cycle of births. Finally, you will become one with god. The cast system is part

of the religion. It is such a sad state. Please see that so many educated people believe in this.

Buddhism is founded by the person by the name of Siddhartha Gautama around 500 BC. It is an atheistic religion. Following an 8-fold noble path you are expected to finally attain Nirvana (Right views, Resolve, Speech, Behaviour, Occupation, Effort, Contemplation and Meditation). That is the way to cessation of sorrow. The Buddhist scripture are threefold (Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka and Abidamma Pitaka) but taken together is 11 times larger than the Bible. Just look at that. How much the devil has corrupted the mind of man? Man works so hard with religion. He writes so much yet still in darkness. Things that is advocated by it is generally good. Nevertheless, the final aim is to end the cycle of rebirths and cease to be born and cease to be altogether, having finished all bad karma and achieved cessation of all desires.

Islam was founded by a person named Mohamad in the 7th century AD. There is no proof that he was from the family of Ishmael. At age 25 he married a woman of 40 and married many times after. The youngest was a girl of 6 years. Can you see the evil in the very founder's life? He began to get visions and thought he was possessed by the devil and wanted to commit suicide but his wife Fatima changed his mind to believe that the visions were from God.

So, he wrote 114 chapters of Quran. That has become the basis of this faith. He said that Torah (Moses), Sabin (Psalms of David), Injil (Gospel of Jesus) are also scriptures

but have been corrupted by Jews and Christians and therefore they cannot be relied upon. Can you see the corruption of the devil? It offers you carnal pleasures in heaven if you are faithful to the religion. A man is promised 72 or many beautiful virgins in heaven. Look at the slavery into which the females are subjected to. The value of a woman is one fourth that of a man. A man can have 4 wives and any number of concubines.

There are many other religions of which we are not going to talk now. These are the ways of man. Please look at Proverbs 14:12.

Different gospels – Confusion in Christendom - Galatians 1:6, 7

Pentecostalism and Prosperity gospel etc.

Pentecostalism is based on two major errors. They are both misinterpretations of the Bible. First error is to believe that healing of the body is provided for in the atonement of Christ. In simple terms this means that when Christ died on the cross, he not only paid the penalty of our sin but also paid for our sicknesses by His blood. This is a wrong understanding of "by His stripes we are healed" Isaiah 53:5.

The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ was exclusively shed for the remission of sin and for nothing else. Please see Matthew 26:28. It is the fulfillment of the Old Testament type of the Day of Atonement when the High Priest would go once a year to the Most Holy place with the blood of a goat and make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Sicknesses were never thought of at that time.

In Matthew 8:17 Matthew clearly says that Isaiah 53:4 was fulfilled during the life time of the Lord Jesus through His healing ministry and not at His death on the cross. The first basic error in Pentecostalism is to believe that the healing of the sicknesses is provided for in the atonement of Christ. This is a blow to the very essence of Christianity. If we have a wrong understanding about the purpose of the death of Christ then I believe, we have lost sight of the plan of God. No one can heal someone by the power of the blood of Jesus. That is not the purpose of the blood. The Lord Jesus heals us by His power and because of His goodness and mercy. Including that in the atonement is nothing but heresy.

Prosperity gospel is a tricky alteration of the true gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. To mix up the promises given to the People of Israel as rewards for their obedience with the New Testament following Christ is pure foolishness to say the least. Any sensible reader will understand that there is a huge difference between the Old and the New Testaments.

Cultic beliefs – Wandering Stars Jude 3, 4

Jehovah Witnesses – Founded by Charles Ruzzle – Watch Tower Publications

Mormons or Latter-day saints – Founded by Joseph Smith – Book of Mormons

Seventh day Adventists – Founded by Ellen G White – Desire of the ages

There are many such cultic movements – Christian Scientists, Christodelphians, Children of God, Jesus only movement etc.

All other occult practices and beliefs such as UFOs and ET – Great Deception 2 Thessalonians 2:11

The belief in UFOs and ET has become an end time phenomenon. The world is being made ready to believe the final lie of the devil. The corrupted minds will believe anything. When Rapture takes place the devil is going to give an explanation to his people. He is going to say that this is an ET attack. All the people will believe it. The Bible talks about it in 2 Thessalonians 2:11.

So dear friends, what is the solution to this great corruption by the devil? It is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness”.

Will you decide to accept the Eternal Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and the guide of your life? He is the only way to God.

When you believe in the Lord Jesus, you will realize that you have become a child of God. You will know that God is so close to you whenever you pray to Him.

The Lord Jesus said “If the Son sets you free, you are free indeed”(John 8:36) and “You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free”(John 8:32).

- Neville Jayasundara -



10 ASPECTS OF THE MERCY OF GOD

- Dines Malcolm Paul -

Continues from previous issue

EVERLASTING MERCY

Psalm 103:17

The 6th description of the Mercy of God is the EVERLASTING MERCY of God. Here we can see the extent of the Mercy of God, its Everlasting.

When we use the term everlasting or eternal in relation to God it means that there's no beginning and there's no end. So God's Mercy towards us has no beginning and no ending. But having said that, we need to keep in mind that we have a limited life span upon this earth.

Though we may live a temporal life on this earth His Mercy which is everlasting reaches down to many generations after us. What a comforting thought this is. We all fear as to what would be the future of our children when we are gone.

But one thing we can be sure that even if we are dead and gone, yet the Everlasting Mercy of God will flow down to the generations after us.

PLENTEOUS MERCY

Psalm 86:5 / 103:8

The 7th description of the Mercy of God is the PLENTEOUS MERCY of God. This speaks to us of the quantity of the Mercy of God. His mercy is so plenty that this plenty is connected to answers to our prayer. We have nothing to fear or be worried about, because God's Mercy is so plentiful He is well able to answer our every prayer.

SURE MERCY – Isaiah 55:3

The 8th description of the Mercy of God is the SURE MERCY of God. No matter what happens in our lives God's Mercy is so sure that it will see that His purposes are fulfilled. When we look into the life of David we find that even though he was known as the man after God's own heart yet his life was marked with many faults, failures & fallings.

But in spite of all that God's Mercy was so sure that it made way

for the purposes & promises of God to be fulfilled and finally see that the Saviour of the world will be born in the lineage of David. So let us cling onto to the Sure Mercy of God knowing that He will fulfill His promises & purposes no matter what happens in our lives.

RICH IN MERCY – Ephesians 2:4

The 9th description of the Mercy of God is the RICHNESS of the MERCY of God. It is the quality of the Mercy of God. In order to appreciate and appropriate the richness of the Mercy of God we need to have a good understanding of our spiritual poverty and bankruptcy. Ephesians 2:1-3 gives us a clear picture of our spiritual poverty. We will consider the statements about our spiritual poverty:

- We were DEAD in TRESPASSES & SINS - Eph. 2:1
- We WALKED according to the COURSE OF THE WORLD - Eph. 2:2
- We WALKED according to the PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR - Eph. 2:2
- We were CHILDREN of DISOBEDIENCE - Eph. 2:2
- We CONDUCTED ourselves in the LUST OF THE FLESH - Eph. 2:3
- We FULFILLED the DESIRES OF THE FLESH & MIND - Eph. 2:3
- We were CHILDREN OF WRATH - Eph. 2:3

It was while we were in the above state that the richness of God's Mercy came into play. God's Mercy was so rich that it surpassed all our poverty and raised us up to sit with Christ Jesus in heavenly places.

ENDURING MERCY – Psalm 136:1

The 10th description of the Mercy of God is the ENDURING MERCY of God. Psalm 136 begins with the Lord Jehovah and ends with the God of heaven and between them is the life of Israel recorded. Throughout every circumstance and experience of the Israelites it was the Mercy of God that sustained them and carried them through.

My personal opinion on the phrase "Mercy endureth forever" is that rather than saying that the Mercy of God is available for ever, it's a statement that says that the Mercy of God upholds us in every circumstance & experience of life all throughout our life. David put it this way in Psalm 23:6 "for goodness and MERCY shall follow me all the days of my life". Psalm 89:1, 2 & 24 and Lamentations 3:22, 23 states the Mercy of God together with the Faithfulness of God.

So we can say it this way too, God's FAITHFUL MERCY or SUSTAINING MERCY or ENDURING MERCY. In all our ups and downs, strengths and weaknesses, victories and defeats, high and low experiences it is the Mercy of God that sees us through. Today we are what we are because God's enduring Mercy is available at every moment and every day of our life.

When all Thy mercies, O my God
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise

One heart & New spirit

I will give them one heart,
And will put a new spirit within you.
Ezekiel 11:19

Generally, we exchange gifts on nearly every occasion with our near and dear ones. These gifts show how much we love and care. But the gift we received, whatever it may be, will not last long. After a while, we may even lose our interest on the gifts we received.

But, God is going to give you the best gift.

God is going to give you a united heart; a heart sincere to God and man; a heart that desires to serve the Lord together as one, shoulder to shoulder; a heart that seeks only the honour and glory of God.

Not only that, it is a package. God is going to give you a new spirit as well.

A new spirit filled with new purposes. A new spirit filled with new decisions; a new spirit that desires to serve the Lord. It is the gift that God is going to give you.

But remember, it will not only be a gift but also a challenge. It is not only a challenge but also an objective for you.

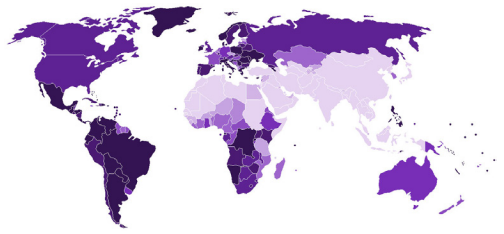
Let us work together as one team with one objective.

Extract from a sermon by
Gunadasa Vithanage
On the promise for year 2020

12 Pillars of Faith

- 1 **God is from everlasting to everlasting self-existing without change** - Ps 90:2
- 2 **There is ONE GOD**
Mal 2:10; Mark 12:32; Rom 3:30; 1 Cor 8:6; Eph 4:6; 1 Tim 2:5; James 2:19. The ONE GOD is manifested in three, eternally existing Persons: God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit - Matt 28:19; 1 John 5:7
- 3 **All things were created by the Lord Jesus Christ and for Him** - Col 1:16,17
- 4 **The Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh without sin, born of a virgin**
2 John 7, Mt. 1:18-22
- 5 **The Lord Jesus led a sinless life and died on a cross to pay the penalty of sin of mankind and rose again bodily on the third day**
2 Cor 5:21, 1 Pet 2:22, 1 Pet 2:24, 1 Cor 15:3,4, Luke 24:36-43
- 6 **At present the Lord Jesus is seated at the right hand of God the Father interceding on behalf of those who trusted in Him unto Salvation**
Mk 16:19, Heb 7:25, 1 John 2:1
- 7 **All men are sinful by nature and the wages of sin is death (Physical, spiritual and eternal)** - Romans 3:23 & 6:23
- 8 **It is essential that a person should repent of his sins and turn to God by faith and believe in the finished work of the Lord Jesus on the cross to gain salvation. Eternal life is a present possession as well as a future hope**
Acts 17:30, 1 Thess 1:10, Acts 16:31
- 9 **A person is saved not by works but by the grace of God received through faith.**
Ephesians 2: 8,9
- 10 **The Holy Spirit indwells every person who has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.** Romans 8: 9, 1 Corinthians 6:19
- 11 **Hell in the Bible is literal and any that do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ unto Salvation will have his portion in the lake of fire which is the second death.** Revelation 20: 14,15
- 12 **The Lord Jesus Christ is coming again to the clouds to take away His Blood bought people which is the Rapture of the true church and then the physical return of the Jesus Christ at the time of Armageddon to reign upon the earth for thousand years.** 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-17, Revelation 19: 11-16

Go ye therefore



During the Christmas seasons you may have heard a modern Carol which has been sung called "Go, tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere that Jesus Christ is born" Soon after the Christmas season, we all forget the song and the meaning of Christmas.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... behold, I am with you always." (Matthew 28:19,20)

This was the message given to the disciples by the resurrected Lord before He ascended to heaven. "Go therefore" is a command. This command was not just for the disciples who assembled there on that mountain. But this same command is applicable to all believers from that generation up to now.

Who is a disciple? John 13:35 says, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Do we truly love one another?

1 John 4:20 says, "If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

So, before we go out and make disciples, we need to look inward. Am I really His disciple?

Luke 6: 27-30, "But I say to you

who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back."

This is virtually impossible unless God is with us. The Lord Jesus was spat upon, beaten yet He did not devour. So, this is what we are called to be, disciples. We cannot be anything higher than that because, the Lord Himself in His human form bore all those suffering for each one of us.

However, verse 20 gives us the assurance. "Behold I am with you always, even to the end of the age". So, we cannot be His disciple with our own strength. But the Lord Jesus Christ has promised to be with us right till the end.

We cannot wash our hands off and say, "Oh that is good for the missionaries who is going to another country. But for us, we are ought to be comfortable in our local assembly."

"Go therefore" applies to each one of us too.

Extract from a sermon by
Timothy De Alwis
On the promise for year 2020



A CRY THAT MATTERS

*This poor man cried,
and the LORD heard him,
and saved him
out of all his troubles.
Psalm 34:6*

- Dhinuka Boralessa -

In this world, many Christians are weeping as their souls are stranded in a desert place with no hope, despair, loneliness, and thirsting for life. Many are sobbing their hearts out wondering if God really does care.

Our Heavenly Father does care. Let's look at three occasions where the Lord answered a cry.

First Occasion was when Abraham made an error when he agreed to sleep with Sarah's maid servant and had Ishmael. Earthly fathers will make mistakes because they are not perfect but we have a Heavenly Father who is perfect in all his ways and dealings with us.

Abraham sent away Hagar and Ishmael with some food and water into the desert of Beersheba. This was a suicide mission. Who can wander in a desert and survive?

Once the water ran out it was only a matter of time before death visits them.

We see this in Genesis 21:15-17 "When the water in the skin was gone,

she put the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot, for she said, "Let me not look on the death of the child." And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her "What is the matter Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there."

God opened her eyes because he heard the cry of a helpless child. Unless God opens our eyes we will never see the blessings stored for our eternal journey. We are short sighted until God opens our eyes.

Gen 21:19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

Today Jesus is our living water. We may not die of thirst but we are spiritually thirsty in a spiritually dry and barren land.

We all need to cry unto Jesus to fill us with living water which is Him in our lives if we want to survive in

this dry and barren land and live abundantly.

John 4:14

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Second occasion was when God delivered Israel from Egypt through Moses in a mighty and miraculous way. They camped at Rephidim where there was no water for people to drink. What did the people do? They quarreled with Moses, grumbled against Moses, and even considered stoning him. Then Moses cried out to the Lord. God heard his cry. God provided the people water miraculously through a rock.

Exodus 17:3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

Exodus 17:6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink

When the believers become ungrateful and begin to quarrel and murmur they begin to attack and murmur against the leadership. The only way to resolve this is like Moses cry unto the LORD who will provide necessary solution through Christ our Rock. Only he can take away the murmuring and quarreling. We need to have the mind of Christ.

Philippians 2:4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

The Third occasion is in the book of Judges when Samson fought against Philistines with a Donkey's jawbone. He killed a thousand men with the jawbone. After the victory he was very thirsty and cried out to the Lord. As a result of his cry to God, God made water come out of the jawbone like a spring. When Samson drank his strength returned and he was revived.

Judges 15:18 And he was sore athirst, and called on the LORD, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?

Judges 15:19 But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived:

As we mature in the Lord, we will face spiritual battles. Only through prayer we have great spiritual victories. After each victory we are spiritually exhausted and we need to cry unto the Lord to be strengthened and revived again through God's word.

John 7:37 If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink

The Lord hears our cry. Be ready to receive when He answers.



I WILL FILL THIS HOUSE WITH GLORY

Today, we are that spiritual house which God desires to fill with His glory. When we look at the context on which this promise was given through Haggai the prophet, the conditions and the circumstances were not very pleasant. But in spite of those circumstances, God gave this promise saying, "I will fill this house with glory!". As we read through the book of Haggai, we find that there are three things that we need to take note of and do in our lives in order for God to fill this house with glory.

1. CONSIDER

In Haggai 1: 5 & 7, we find that the Lord is saying to the people of Israel to consider their ways. The first thing we need to consider is our **PRIORITIES**. In Haggai 1: 2 & 4 we find, the people were going after their own ways and doing their own things without being

considerate about the house of God. If we want God to fill His house with glory, we need to put our priorities right. We need to give priority to God, His Word and His house. Only when we consider our priorities, God can fill His house with glory.

Secondly, we need to also consider the **PURPOSES**. In Haggai 1: 6 & 9 we find that the people were involved in doing many things but, all that was very futile. God was not happy with what they were doing and God's blessing was not on the things they were doing, because their purposes were wrong and they were not following the will of God. In our lives today, as we acquire and accumulate many things in our lives, let us consider the purposes behind all that. Only if the purposes of God become our purposes in life, then God can fill His house with glory.

And thirdly, we need to consider the **PROMPTING of God**. In Haggai 2: 17 God says that I gave you all these and did all these to you but, you did not repent and return to me. Today many things take place in our lives. But, we need to remember that through all those circumstances, God is speaking to us and trying to catch our attention. God through His goodness and through His severity, He is speaking to us to repent and return to Him. So let us consider.

2. CHANGE

If God wants to fill His house with glory, we need to desire and decide to change. The first thing we need to change is our **ATTITUDE**. In Haggai 2: 3 & 9, God was asking, "Have you seen the earlier house, and now how do you see it?" and then said, "I will fill this latter house with glory". There are going to be many changes in the days to come. But we need to change our attitude to accept those changes and see through the eyes of God.

Secondly, we need to change our **ACTIONS**. In Haggai 2:4, the Lord is calling the governor, priest and the people to be strong and to do the work. God was telling the people, "Now change from doing your own works and be involved in the work of God." You need to consecrate yourself to do the work of God because, the Lord says, "If you work, then I am with you". Only if we act, God will give His presence.

And thirdly we need to change our **ASSOCIATIONS**. In Haggai 2: 10 – 14, we see that the Lord was asking them to change their associations with the things that bring defilement to them. If God wants to fill His house with glory, our associations with the unclean things must be changed. We need to change and get rid of all forms of things that can bring in defilement in our lives.

3. CONSECRATE

According to Haggai 1: 12, first of all, we need to consecrate ourselves to **OBEY** God, His Word and His servants. If we do not consecrate our lives to obey, then God cannot fill us with His glory.

And then secondly, we need to consecrate ourselves to **FEAR** the Lord as per Haggai 1: 12. All day long, we need to walk in the fear of the Lord. Let us be conscious that God sees, God knows and God hears. And if that knowledge is there we will walk in the fear of God.

And thirdly, we need to consecrate our lives to **WORK** for the Lord according to Haggai 1: 13.

Extract from a sermon by
Dinesh Malcolm Paul
On the promise for year 2020



It is
Finished
John 19:30

The Importance of the Cross

'The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing.'
1 Corinthians 1:18 NKJV

God dying on the cross for our sins sounds like 'foolishness' to some people. Their philosophy is 'If I cannot understand it, I won't accept it.' That's where they get it wrong.

Salvation comes through faith alone. 'Unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 18:3 NKJV).

Simple, childlike faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross is all that's required.

The story is told of a student whose professor gave him zero on a test. Upset, he said, 'I don't deserve this grade.' The professor smiled and quipped, 'I agree, but zero is the lowest grade I can give.'

That's how God feels about our wisdom. 'The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God' (1 Corinthians 3:19 NKJV).

One day a man stood on the roof of his house during a flood, and prayed, 'God, please save me.' Soon a rowboat came by and offered to take him to safety. But he said, 'No, God will take care of me.' The waters kept coming up until they were almost at his waist. Suddenly a helicopter appeared overhead and a rope ladder was lowered down. 'Oh no, God will take care of me.' Soon after that the man drowned. When he stood before God, he said, 'Why didn't you save me?' God responded, 'I sent you a rowboat and a helicopter. What else did you want?' At the cross, God did everything required to save you. All you have to do is trust in Christ and receive the gift of eternal life.

Hymnist Robert Lowry wrote:

*'What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What
can make me whole again? Nothing
but the blood of Jesus. Oh, precious
is the flow that makes me white as
snow. No other fount I know; nothing*

but the blood of Jesus.'

Why glory in the cross?

'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Galatians 6:14 KJV

It's interesting that in the Bible Jesus doesn't ask us to remember His birth or His resurrection, although we know we should, but He tells us to remember His death. When He instituted the Lord's Supper, He said, 'This do in remembrance of me' (Luke 22:19 KJV).

Paul said, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' The cross, like the gallows and the electric chair, is an instrument of death. So why glory in it?

Because of what took place there. When Jesus said, 'It is finished,' all your sins from the cradle to the grave were paid for. **So the cross is God's**

first and last word when it comes to salvation. It's His first word because Jesus was 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world' (Revelation 13:8 KJV). And the cross is God's last word about salvation, for in heaven they will sing, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation' (Revelation 5:9 KJV).

There is no 'plan B' for salvation. **The only road that goes to heaven goes through Calvary.** You can't bypass the cross or go around it if you want to be saved. The Bible says, 'Without shedding of blood [there] is no remission [for sin]' (Hebrews 9:22 KJV).

As you look at the cross today, you'll see the curse of sin, the cost of sin, and the cure for sin. And as you look at the cross, remind yourself: 'He died for a wretch like me.'

- Benjamin Devadason -

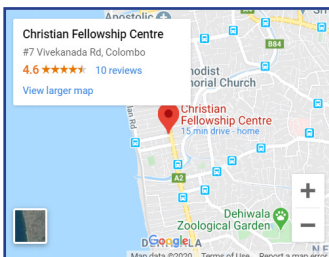
Until Next Issue!

Watch



Bible Study on The Book of Revelation

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