

ISSUE **04**

October - December 2020

LIGHT

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

The Unknown Universe

Delight

Esther the Queen

Seven Kings

A magazine of

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CENTRE

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ESTHER

THE QUEEN

We have great examples of praying women in the Bible. The one found in the book of Esther is what I would like to remind you about in this article.

We all have read the book of Esther and know the story very well. But may I suggest that as believing women we revisit this story and see what God has for us at this time. Let me share with you a couple of thoughts briefly from this true story happened about 2500 years ago.

Just to refresh your memory please read the book of Esther chapter 4 before you read further. There are only 17 verses in the chapter.

To summarize the story of Esther and to get the message across, let me introduce 5 headings:

1. The Sovereign election of God
2. Unprecedented attack of the enemy
3. The Impossible task or the 'Mission impossible'
4. Incredible favour of the king
5. The Perpetual memorial

1. The Sovereign election of God.

I am sure you are aware that the book of Esther is the only book in the Bible where the Name of God is not mentioned. But we must also know that there is hardly any other book in the Bible in which God's providential care and His intervention in human affairs

are so evident. Another special thing about this book is that our part of the world in the East is mentioned by name. This is the only book which has India mentioned by Name.

Apart from these, in Chapter 2 we read of the amazing story as to how a young Jewish girl by the name of Hadassah ascended to the position of Queen Esther, the most influential woman in the whole world. Please read 2:17. "The king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti". This definitely is a sovereign act of God. She was just nobody at one time suddenly becoming Queen Esther. This is how God works. As written in 1 Corinthians 1:27, 'God had chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty'.

We must know and believe every one of us has been sovereignly elected by God unto salvation. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" is our description in 1 Peter 1:2. Please read that full verse. Yes, we believed in the Lord Jesus and His finished work on the cross but it was God who had elected us before anything had happened. In John 15:16 our Lord Jesus taught this truth to His disciples. Queen Esther was the sovereign choice of God and so are we. God had a purpose in electing Queen Esther and so has He in electing us.

2. The Unprecedented attack.

The devil is always planning to nullify the purposes of God and to bring calamity upon God's people. So, through Haman the devil was trying to destroy the people of Israel. Even today we can see the work of the enemy the devil all around us. He tries to bring in danger, discouragement or death. Soon all the Israelites in the whole kingdom of emperor Ahasuerus were going to be put to death at the instigation of Haman. Let us remind ourselves from 1 Peter 5:8 that the devil is seeking to do that very thing even today. But today he wants to destroy us spiritually. He tries to get us to disobey the Lord and dishonour Him. He will lay traps all around us to make us fall and weaken our faith and our walk with the Lord. He does not want us to read the Bible. The enemy planned big that day to do away the whole race of Israel.

3. The Impossible task or the 'Mission Impossible'.

Mordecai knew that their only hope was now pinned on Esther being in the palace of the King. But there was a great challenge to overcome. No one could ever go before the great Emperor without being invited. That was the law. When someone appears before the king, he had to stretch the sceptre towards that person, if his or her life was to be spared. Not even the queen would be spared. That was the law of the throne.

Queen Esther was entrusted with the Mission Impossible of appearing before the King. Please read her preparation for the task in Esther 4:16. "Go, gather together all the Jews that

are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish". She became bold because of her preparation with fasting. It is good to pause here for a moment to compare our situation with hers. She had to take a great risk in going before the king. She said "If I perish, I perish" (4:16). But what about us. We are invited to appear before our King at any time for any simple or serious need. Please read Hebrews 4:15,16. We are invited by our loving God to ask of Him. "Call unto me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not" (Jeremiah 33:3).

4. The Incredible favour of the king.

Ahasuerus was a world emperor. Our God is the King of this universe. In 3 places in the book of Psalms, it is said "The LORD reigneth" Ps.93:1, 97:1 and 99:1. The king showed favour and extended the Sceptre towards queen Esther when she entered into his chamber! And then we read the wonderful words uttered by the king in Esther 5:3 – **"What wilt thou, queen Esther? It shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom"**. What great favour is this!

I want you to read the New Testament presentation of this same verse and that is by our King the Lord Jesus Christ. John 14:13 – **"Whatever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son"**. Half of the Kingdom was not she came to ask but he was ready to give it. Please see Ephesians 3:20 – "Now unto Him

that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think". Please see how much greater is our position than that of queen Esther. "Ask and it shall be given thee"(Mt.7:7). Also see Mt.21:22 – "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive". This is incredible favour of our King! Then what is our problem? Why are we not going to this King? Maybe we do not truly believe His word. Just imagine if Queen Esther did not believe the words of the king! She would have perished with her people. We need to have simple faith and come to Him in prayer.

5. The Perpetual memorial

According to Esther 9:27, it was finally decreed that there should be a memorial of this great victory in Israel every year. I wonder if you had heard about the War that took place in 1973. That war is now known as the Yom Kippur War. It is because that day being a total holiday in Israel because of the memorial which started during queen Esther's time. The Arab world decided to attack Israel on that day. Israel was taken by surprise. All the troops were on Holiday. But God was in control. Once again God proved Himself faithful. Within 3 days the battle was under control and Israeli troops made great gains.

This is a good reminder to us believers that our God has not changed.

Why should we doubt Him? Let us go to Him with all our prayer requests. He is going to answer us and do what He promised.

- Anne Jayasundara -

CHRIST & HIS CHURCH

Loved the church, and gave
Himself for it.

Ephesians 5:25

Purchased with His own blood.

Acts 20:28

Builds His church.

Matthew 16:18

Sanctifies and cleanses it with
the washing of water by the

Word.

Ephesians 5:25

Beautifies the church with the
gifts of the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:13

Church becomes the bride of
Christ

Revelation 19:7

God is going to be glorified in
the church forever.

Ephesians 3:21



TEST OF TIMES

Part 2

[Click here to read Part 1](#)

God uses the test of times to teach us many lessons and to try us in different areas of our life so that we would be faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to take careful note that just because we seriously and faithfully believe and follow the Lord that it will not spare us from various difficult situations and trials of life; rather very often we will have to face more of such situations in life. So we need to always learn the lessons and come out of these testing victoriously.

In the previous edition we considered the first aspect of the test of times.

1) Test of our FAITH in God

When we go through trying times in life first of all God is testing our **FAITH in Him**.

a) FAITH in the SOVEREIGN PURPOSE of God – Romans 8:28

Whenever we face difficult circumstances in life, and go through the test of times let us remember that God is interested in testing our faith,

and our **faith in the Sovereign purpose of God**.

b) FAITH in the SALVATION PLAN of God – Acts 4:12

Remember God is using the test of times to also test our **faith in the Salvation Plan of God**. Make sure you know and believe the Lord Jesus not only as Saviour but also the Lord of your life.

c) FAITH in the SUFFICIENT PROVISION of God – Philippians 4:19

When we face the test of times, God is also testing our **faith in the Sufficient Provision of God**.

2) Test of our FEAR of God

Now we are going on to consider the 2nd aspect of the test of times and that is God is using the test of times to test our Fear of God.

Very often we think that the fear of God is needed only at certain periods of time in our life. But let us consider what the Bible clearly tells us of the fear of God.

Proverbs 23:17 "...but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long."

Here we can very simply see and understand that the fear of God should be found every moment of our lives, and the psalmist goes on to speak about the heritage or inheritance of those who fear God in **Psalm 61:5** "*thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.*"

Next we also need to understand what is meant by fear of God. There are many definitions for the fear of God but let me give my personal understanding and definition of the fear of God in this way. Fear of God means to be aware that **God KNOWS my every thought, God HEARS every word that I speak and God SEES every action of mine.** This awareness in our life will bring in that deep fear of God and if this fear is found in our lives, our lives would surely be so much different and blessed and the way we live and look at life will also be different. Dear friends let us all examine our hearts and lives and see whether we have the fear of God in our lives and especially do we have it throughout the day, every moment of our lives.

Having looked into what the fear of God means now we are going to consider the areas of our lives where the fear of God is practically exhibited.

a) Fear of God in our CONDUCT

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in

simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward." 2 Corinthians 1:12

Here we see that Paul the Apostle was speaking of the conduct of the apostles. And that reminds us that our conduct should be governed by the fear of God. Conduct governed by the fear of God will result in 3 things.

HOLINESS

Those who walk in the fear of the Lord can be easily identified as they don't profess holiness, but rather they practice holiness in their lives, which would be very visible to everyone. So if we fear God in our life and conduct there will not be any hidden dark chambers in our hearts and lives. And our standard of holiness is not to be compared with each other, but we have to compare our holiness against the holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

1 Peter 1:15, 16

The sinless holy life of Jesus is seen in the following statements found in the New Testament:

- "KNEW NO sin" – 2 Cor. 5:21
- "HAD NO sin" – John 8:46
- "DID NO sin" – 1 Peter 2:22.

Also the Bible tells us that God has called us unto holiness *"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."* 1 Thessalonians 4:7

Therefore let our holy living reveal the fear of God in our life and conduct.

HONESTY

Secondly the fear of God in our conduct is seen in the honesty/integrity we display in and through our lives. An honest life also means a transparent life. Job of the Old Testament is a very striking example, as God himself testified of the integrity of Job in Job 1:1, 1:8 & 2:3.

Also we see another outstanding character in the New Testament, Nathaniel of whom the Lord Jesus Christ said in John 1:47 a man without guile. Christians are generally known by the people of the world as honest persons, but I wonder how true it is in the present world. In simple matters we need to practice honesty as the Lord said our "yes" should be "yes" and our "no" should be "no".

If we truly fear God in our lives then surely this aspect of honesty will be seen in our conduct.

Dear friend, look into your life and see whether this kind of honesty can be found in your life so much so that the Lord takes note of it and commends it. Hold onto your integrity no matter what the cost would be.

HUMILITY

The third result of fearing God is humility. Those who sincerely fear God in their lives will always have an attitude of humility in life. And only those who have this humility can fully begin to appreciate & appropriate the Grace of God operating in their lives. When there is pride reigning and governing our lives there is no room at all for the Grace of God to operate in our lives.

The best example of humility is found in the Lord Jesus Christ and that is recorded in Philippians 2:5-8. The humility of the Lord Jesus is seen even to the point of death and that is the standard we need to have in our lives and that is the challenge for us.

When we fear God in our lives we will always be conscious of our unworthiness and we will experience God's grace and that will help us to stay humble.

Dear friend let us endeavor to have the fear of God in our conduct and as a result of it let holiness, honesty & humility be seen and exhibited in and through our lives.

To be continued...

- Dinesh Malcolm Paul -

Seven Kings

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

1 Peter 2:9

In my journey with the Lord Jesus Christ I faced many challenges which helped me to grow as a believer. Through the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles I learnt seven valuable lessons from the lives of seven Kings. Through these lessons I learned, how easily sin can beset us in our walk with Christ.

1. Obedience to God's word


1 Samuel 15:22

And Samuel said,

"Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams."

In the book of 1 Samuel we learn that God was the King of Israel until they rejected Him and wanted an earthly king like the rest of the nations. God helped Samuel to choose Saul as Israel's first earthly king. God gave Saul specific instructions regarding a nation called Amalekites. God wanted Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites. But Saul did not follow God's instructions fully. Saul chose to keep that which he considered good to offer as a sacrifice to God. This decision cost Saul his kingdom. As we begin our journey in Christ we need to learn God is more interested in our

obedience than our service. We might try to gain approval from man like king Saul more than seeking God's will. God's word teaches us obedience is better than sacrifice. The Lord Jesus always pleased the Father. In Matthew 3:17 this is God's testimony of His Son "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." We should desire such a testimony from God concerning our lives.

 *When you look back at your life, have you lived for God or man?*

2. Seeking after God


1 Peter 5:8

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

King David is known as the man after God's own heart, and the boy who defeated Goliath. With such a reputation he still fell into sin when he became complacent. How did he become complacent? He decided not to engage in battle when it was customary for kings to go into battle. Instead he stayed back in the palace. During such a time only, he was caught off guard by the beauty of a woman which led him to commit adultery and murder.

If King David could fall, how much more we need to be on guard. Satan is not interested in lukewarm Christians. He seeks for those who love the Lord and desire to grow in Christ. The enemy is like a roaring lion. We must never be satisfied and complacent in our walk with the Lord. We should continue to seek Jesus and desire to know Him more and more.

Soon as we pat ourselves on the back, the enemy will bring distractions to remove our attention from the Lord Jesus. As Peter warned us "BE SOBER". Let us look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith.

 *How complacent are you with your life?*

3. Marriage

1 Kings 11:4

For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods:

King Solomon known in the world to be the wisest King that ever lived. Even the wisest king was unable to take heed to the warnings given regarding marrying Gentile women. At the beginning Solomon seemed to be in control worshipping God Jehovah. But as he grew older his Gentile wives influenced him to turn away from following Jehovah God and to go after other gods.

Many young people are defeated when it comes to choosing their life partner. Most of the time, they think they can convert their unbelieving partner and eventually it is they who grow weak in their faith. As we read in Amos 3:3

, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Marriage is a partnership and both need to be of the same mind. Marriage is a one time decision and if we get it wrong the first time it cannot be undone. God needs to be included when deciding because He knows who you need to marry.

 *What does marriage mean to you?*


4. Wise counselor

2 Chronicles 10:8

But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him.

King Rehoboam though being the son of the wisest king, lacked wisdom. When we are young it irks us to take advise from those who are older and wiser in counsel. We would rather listen to our peers. That is exactly what Rehoboam did and it cost him his kingdom. The most important decisions of your life needs to be guided by God and through His wise counselors.

In spiritual matters seek guidance from your spiritual mentors rather than trusting your peers who will misguide you due to lack of experience.

 *In your last calamity or life changing decisions who did you go for advice?*

5. Relying on God

2 Chronicles 16:9


For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.

King Asa at the beginning of his reign relied on God when facing battles. 2 Chronicles 14:11 says “And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee,....”

This is how we are when we begin our Journey with the Lord Jesus. We will look to him for everything. As time goes by, we become self-confident in our walk because we are reading the Bible regularly and we know our scriptures. The same zeal we had in seeking the Lord’s mind is replaced by our own wisdom. At this point only we get blind sided to make foolish decisions. King Asa encouraged the people to follow God until he decided to trust in himself.

2 Chronicles 16:12 says “Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians”.

As we grow in Christ we need to take heed that we do not become self reliant, over confident and less sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

 *When was the last time you relied on God?*

6. Unequally yoked

2 Corinthians 6:14

Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?

King Jehoshaphat faithfully followed God and God blessed him abundantly. As he became great in riches and honor he partnered himself with King Ahab. 2 Chronicles 18:1 says, “Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab”. King Jehoshaphat gave his son in marriage to King Ahab’s daughter. King Ahab is known to be one of the most wicked kings of Israel.

What can we take from this? Let not God’s blessings dull our senses. God’s principles remain the same because God never changes. We must always partner with believers when it comes to spiritual matters.

In some occasions believers invite unbelievers to join their organization which is dedicated for God’s service. They choose the unbeliever for their qualifications and assets. Down the line the organization grows weak due to lack of God’s direction and Lordship. We always need to maintain our godly principles in spiritual decisions.

 *Is God your partner for everything?*

7. Gratitude towards God’s people

2 Chronicles 24:22

Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it.

King Joash as a baby was saved by his aunt and her husband priest Jehoida from Queen Athaliah who killed all of Joash’s siblings to gain the throne. In the midst of

political unrest, priest Jehoida risked his life to keep Joash safe.

At the age of seven Joash became King. He did good as long as priest Jehoida was alive.


As soon as priest Jehoida died he went astray. God sent Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest to rebuke King Joash. The King had Zechariah killed. King Joash forgot all the goodness he had received and simply rewarded priest Jehoida's son with evil.

How are we in terms of our gratitude to God and his servants who teach us His word? As babes in Christ we were so eager to listen to God's word. As we grew in the Lord did we forget those who helped us in our walk with the Lord?

When we receive correction we might get angry and character assassinate those who correct us from God's word.

Let us not be like King Joash who lacked gratitude and compassion.

Let us support God's work and God's people with our tithes, time and talents.

 *Do you remember to pray regularly for those who teach you God's word?*

Galatians 6:10

As we have therefore opportunity,
let us do good unto all men,
especially unto them
who are of the household of faith.

- Dhinuka Boralessa -

Unsearchable Riches of Christ

Peace which passeth all
understanding
Philippians 4:7

Love of Christ which passeth
knowledge.
Ephesians 3:19

Joy unspeakable and
full of glory.
1 Peter 1:8

Hope of glory
Colossians 1:27

Faith much more precious
than gold
1 Peter 1:7

Glorious liberty of the children
of God
Romans 8:21

Exceeding greatness of
His power (Power of His
resurrection)
Ephesians 1:19



LEVITICUS

Discovering Christ

An extract from a Bible study conducted by Neville Jayasundara

In the book of Leviticus chapter 1, we have the description about the “Burnt Sacrifice”. That speaks to us about the Lord Jesus Christ offering Himself and dying in the perfect will of God in full consecration to the will of God.

In chapter 2, we have the description about the meat/meal offering. The believer now has the Lord Jesus Christ as his spiritual strength. Meal offering reminds us of the Lord Jesus who is the spiritual food through which we can be strengthened.

Chapter 3 has the description about the peace offering which speaks to us of the total work of Christ in relation to the peace of the believer.

Under this third heading we will look at some points. Please follow in chapter 3.

Firstly, the description in verse 1 says, “Male or female”, this is the first time this comes. There we have the idea of this particular sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ being enjoyed by both God and man. Christ has become our peace.

Secondly, in Christ both God and man are satisfied. There is a portion given to man and to God of the sacrifice. It is the Lord Jesus who has this unique ability to satisfy the heart of God and the heart of man by His life and death.

Thirdly, we understand that the fellowship with God should be with fresh appreciation of Christ. God has planned that His people should continue to appreciate the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, otherwise we tend to lose our peace. Leviticus 7:18 said that no one can eat the peace offering on the third day. This appreciation of Christ should go on in our lives on a daily basis.

Now we have a daily devotion time. That is an ideal way of beginning to appreciate Christ. Every believer should have a regular time of reading of the scriptures then meditation of the scriptures and spending time before God on a daily basis.

God has planned our Salvation and our Christian life like that. Without that we cannot maintain a vital relationship with God, it will be a weak relationship.

Then we have at least once a week as believers, gathering together to remember Him. And there again it is a fresh appreciation of Christ. That is the reason as to why we do not use written down articles or prayers or messages and repeat it again and again. Then the freshness is not there. But the Spirit of God can give us new appreciation of Christ when we do not follow a written down system of prayers or service.

Many of the well known Christian leaders, sometimes preachers, go through a meaningless ceremony on Sunday. Go into a Church building and go through the prayer book. It is a very sad situation. We need to have that newness in our fellowship and understanding of Christ. In every prayer, there should be liberty to say something new. But most of the traditional Christian churches don't have that liberty because they have to read through the prayer of the book.

So, we must appreciate the provision God has made regarding our souls; without complaining we must appreciate our type of fellowship and service.

Fourthly, this is a strange thing that there is the presence of leaven in the peace offering. It is given as the law of the peace offering in Leviticus 7: 13, "Besides the cakes, he shall offer for his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings."

It is very rarely you find that leavened bread was allowed in a sacrifice or offering. This reminds us of a situation, in our lives, of constant struggle with sin. Very often we lose peace because of sin entering into our lives. So it is a reminder in the peace offering that some leaven is also offered, leavened bread also permitted, that the believer knows the constant presence of sin in his life.

This is a truth that has such opposing impact. If we affirm this presence of sin too much in our lives, one might say, that we are no better than a nonbeliever. But if we deny that there is sin in our lives, we make God a liar.

1 John 1:8-10 is the antitype of that leavened bread. That passage is entirely

about a believer. A believer should not sin, that is 1 John 2:1, but a believer sins 1 John 2:1. Reluctance to accept this truth has led to a situation where many believers lead a hypocritical life. A Christian has been influenced by the fellow Christians not to show himself as a person who has any sin, because it is a disgrace. But Paul said that he was a wretched man having certain tendencies to sin, and he has to beat his body and bring it under subjection. He said that he does things that he doesn't like to do. He says, "It is not I who do that but the sin in me".

This presence of sin in our lives is a truth that every believer has to live with. So what God is expecting of us is to come to the Lord Jesus Christ and, more and more, identify ourselves with His death and be released from the power of sin.

None of us can truthfully say, "I have been perfect in my thoughts, words and deeds". But we can say, "I am guilt free because I have confessed and received forgiveness".

Both fifth and sixth points speak to us about man's portion. Firstly according to Levi 7:31, there is that breast area of the flesh given to the priest. Yes, it is due to the agony of heart that we lose peace, the plague of our hearts. But Christ will minister peace to us again. So that is the message of the breast portion. 1 John 2: 1 says that He has become our advocate. Regarding what? Regarding our inner agony. We have some disturbing thoughts in us, sin has come, we lose peace now, and then the Lord Jesus Christ will minister peace to us. Our Lord Jesus Christ will appear before the Father and do the mediation. Then we get up from our confession posture on our knees with true liberty.

And the Second portion of man is shoulder according to Levi 7: 32. There the shoulder speaks to us of strength. Now this is more about the external burdens we bear. This is not about inner sin. Not close to the heart. But the shoulder, the place of strength. Christ becomes our strength when we are weighed down with burdens of life.

Philippians 4: 6 & 7 can be taken as an example. We all know practically that when we are faced with difficulties of this life our peace gets disturbed. Then the answer is in Christ. The problems can remain the same but we will still have peace when we come to Christ.

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

“Cast all your care upon him; for He cares for you” 1 Peter 5: 7

“Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee” Psalm 55: 22

Now we must visit these verses again and again. That is how we can make Christ our peace.

The seventh point about the peace offering is that it foreshadows the Table of the Lord in the New Testament. A severe warning is given in Levi 7:20. “But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that pertain unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people”

Immediately you can remember the passage in 1 Corinthians 11:30. It’s almost equal to Lev 7:20, “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep”

So it is a unique instruction in Levi 7:20. But we will say, “how severe this instruction is”. But we find in the New Testament, we have to consider the Lord’s Table as a very precious and important activity and thereby be prepared for the Lord’s Table.

Therefore, peace of the believer is of great importance. That is why God speaks to us about it again and again. Now let me give you the verses under the heading “Peace of the believer”:

Perfect Peace

Isaiah 26: 3

Great Peace

Psalms 119: 165

Abundance of Peace

Jeremiah 33: 6

Overflowing Peace

Isaiah 48: 18

Peace that belongs to the Lord Jesus

John 14: 27

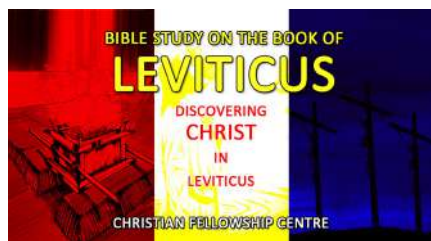
Reigning Peace

Colossians 3: 15

Peace which passeth all understanding

Philippians 4:7

[Watch the full series of Bible Studies on The Book of Leviticus via YouTube](#)





Delight thyself in the Lord

(Psalm 37:4)

I like to focus your attention to the home in Bethany – the home of Martha and Mary. Martha, Mary and their brother Lazarus lived in this home. According to the scriptures the Lord was a frequent visitor to this house. The Lord liked this family very much. The Lord Jesus chose them to be His friends. It is amazing that Jesus needed friendship. Whenever Jesus needed a little rest He came to this home in Bethany. So next to His disciples this family were very close friends, of our Lord Jesus.

On this occasion at Bethany, we read in the Word of God (Luke 10: 38 – 42) that Martha received or welcomed the Lord into her home. Next we see that Martha was interested in preparing a good meal for the Master. Thirdly, we see that Martha soon found herself in trouble. She noticed her sister, Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus and spending time with Him, listening to His teachings. Martha was cooking all alone in the kitchen and finds no help coming from her sister. So she gets tired, frustrated, angry and even jealous of her. Finally, what happens, she comes to the Lord and complains about her sister. What was her complaint? She tells Jesus, “Lord, my sister has left me to work alone. Please tell her to come and help me”. Then what was our Lord’s reply? Did Jesus tell her, “Mary you are wrong, you must first go and help your sister?” Did Jesus say anything like that?

No! He did not say anything like that. We know the answer the Lord Jesus gave. Jesus said, “Martha, Martha, you are careful and troubled about many things” (Luke 10: 41). In other words, the Lord rejected Martha’s request. I am sure that the Lord wanted Martha also to come and join Mary at His feet.

Now we are going to see Mary’s attitude. Mary is also facing a difficult situation. Her own sister is complaining about her to the Lord. But we see Mary was not moved. She did not get upset. She remained calm and collected. What was the reason for this? She knew she was not spending time with an ordinary person. She knew she was spending time with the Messiah – The Anointed One – The Saviour of the world. Mary realized, to sit at Jesus’ feet and hear His Word is the way of blessing. Secondly, she knew the Lord’s desire. The Lord’s desire was that everyone should come to Him first. Mary by coming to Jesus would have settled many things about her personal life. She realized she needed forgiveness and salvation. So she chose to come to Jesus, sit at His feet and to listen to His Word which is the path of blessing.

Mary continued to delight in the Lord by remaining at the feet of Jesus. In Psalm 37: 4 we read, “Delight thyself in the Lord and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart.” Delight means highly taken up or

find great pleasure. To delight in the Lord is to delight in His Word. When we read His Word, it is like sitting at His feet and listening to what the Lord says. The Lord makes a special remark about Mary. The Lord says, “Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:42). What does the Lord mean by saying, “Good part which shall not be taken away from her”? This is very important to all of us. The “good part which shall not be taken away from her” means something eternal or something that will last forever or something we cannot lose. First is eternal life. When we come to know the Lord personally, He gives us eternal life (John 3: 16). Secondly, we receive the forgiveness of sins (1 John 1: 9). He forgives us forever. Thirdly, Gods presence with you (Heb 13: 5b). Fourthly, access to the Lord through prayer and reading of the Word of God (Heb 4: 16).

Mary found that good part which was not taken away from her. She sat at the feet of Jesus. She delighted in the Lord and received the fullness of joy in His presence (Psalm 16: 11).

In closing, may the words of Psalm 104: 33 – 34 continue to enrich our lives. “I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live, I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. My meditation of Him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord.”

May we be faithful in His sight and may the Lord Jesus say to each of us, “my beloved daughter, you have chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from you.” May God help you to delight in the Lord always.

- Swinitha Perera -

The Sevenfold Relevance of Suffering

We are called to suffer
1 Peter 2:20

It is a privilege to suffer
1 Peter 4:16/ Philippians 1:29

Suffering makes us worthy for
the kingdom of God
2 Thessalonians 1:5

Suffering is a preparation for
glory
1 Peter 5:10

Suffering is a proof of our
godliness
2 Timothy 3:12

Suffering is an experience of
comfort
2 Corinthians 1:5

Suffering is a condition to reign
2 Timothy 2:12

The Unknown Universe

Man, where are we really heading? We are all moving individually and collectively, and as a matter of fact, the universe in its entirety is moving.

Cosmology is the study of the origin and the so called evolution of the universe. How did we do so far here? Really not much. In desperate moves we are groping between two models of the universe: inflationary and cyclic. Inflationary model refers to a combination of three concepts: the big bang, the inflation mechanism and the dark energy - none of which are perfect sciences to this day. Cyclic model argues that big bang is not the beginning of space and time but, rather, the universe undergoes cycles of evolution. It is a never ending big bangs which results in never ending nearly perfect vacuums, and then another big bang occurs.

How sure we are in these speculations? I am afraid so far not at all. Though an enormous amounts of complex mathematics, physics, algorithms, AI, Big Data analytics and so on and so forth are aggressively used in this pursuit we have barely scratched the surface. In the big bang, the universe underwent an inflationary process during which it expanded a googol (10 to the power of 100) times within a billionth of a billionth of a trillionth of a second! Mind boggling. But that's the kind of numbers we are dealing with. Of course no one can go back in time to be realistic about

what may be called even a conjectural hypothesis. Estimatedly, the universe is about 13.8 billion years old. Opps! We still don't even know how exactly did Bruce Lee die about 50 years ago!!

With so much studies involving mathematics, physics and super computer models, and super electronic machines capable of handling petabytes of data there has been no convergence of views around the origins of the universe and its complexities.

We are dealing with two partial theories namely the general theory which deals with the cosmological distances, and the quantum mechanics dealing with phenomena on extremely small scale - at subatomic level. The two partial theories are not consistent; they do not reconcile. There is no such a thing called a unified theory of the four known forces - gravitational, weak and strong nuclear forces, and the electromagnetic force - which is coherent between the two theories. It is a far cry from the dream that the day comes when we find a unified theory that will account for all four forces as components of a single force. What's more. So far there is no clear view of the mix of dark matter and dark energy. According to a recent study the dark energy accounts for only about 4% of the mass of the universe! What is the other 96 % then? There has been swings in every direction about these intriguing

and abstract concepts. What about the ideas around parallel universes, mirror universes, that there are more than the 3 known dimensions (about 10 of them according to the string theory)? We can't be even focused on one universe let alone more of them!

What have we seen so far? Not much except the one obvious: that we are nowhere close to finding the simplest clue for the origin of the universe. This is the obvious we have seen. Now, "You can't make a man unsee what he has seen" - Bertolt Brecht. Unless he pretends.

We are trying to concur that which we do not know about, the unknown universe. But see the obvious: we can't even concur such a tiny microorganism such as the Coronavirus which is a single strand RNA of about 140 nm or 0.12 microns in diameter (in perspective, the diameter of a human hair is about 80 microns). Over 150 countries are hard at work, frantically trying to find a vaccine or an accurate cure. That shows how vulnerable, finite and infinitesimal we are as humans. This virus is single-handedly controlling the affairs of the people around the globe. Ironically it is controlling economies, financial markets, education, employment, governments, health care systems, social life, politics, and much more. Yet, it is not a super intelligent being, just an RNA with no knowledge of mathematics or economics.

God is in control. He can kill the virus in one stroke. He allowed plagues among Israelites and other nations in the history. But he also stopped it in one stroke at his will, without administering

a cure or a vaccine. He did that. That is the God we should put our trust in. Virus or no virus people are still defying God and his domain in their lives. Some have repented, but there are many who have not. Anything but submission to God, even if it means imminent death!

Man, we are still moving, along with the whole universe. Our time on earth is but a few days. Just think about it at least for a moment. How many more days you are going to live? You have to leave everything behind you and vanish into the unknown eternity. It is not unknown to people who put their trust in Jesus Christ as their saviour. Eternity for them is known. But for the others it is the blackest eternity of abysmal depth!

Today is the time to repent, not tomorrow. There won't be a tomorrow for many. We are going to die anyway, may be not from the virus. But we sure will leave this earth sooner or later. And then what . . . ?

- Alex Perera -



Where shall I go from Your Spirit?

Or where shall I flee from Your presence?

If I ascend to heaven, You are there!

If I make my bed in Sheol, You are there!

If I take the wings of the morning

and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
even there Your hand shall lead me,
and Your right hand shall hold me.

If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light about me be night,"

even the darkness is not dark to You;

the night is bright as the day,

for darkness is as light with you.

(Psalm 139:7-12)

KOINONIA

AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP (Part 02)

Previous Issue:

- A) The **BASIS** of fellowship
- B) The **BAROMETER** of fellowship

C) The **BLESSINGS** of Christian Fellowship

1. It gives effectiveness in service

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work" (Eccl 4:9)

2. It gives encouragement in times of trouble.

"If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!" (Eccl 4:10)

Our Lord Jesus sent forth his apostles two and two, that one might supply his neighbour's deficiencies; that the healthy might uphold the sick; and the brave might cheer the timid.

To raise the fallen, to cherish the weakly, to relieve the needy, to assist the widow and fatherless, - this is true religion. Here is the sphere for the manifestation of Christian fellowship.

3. It promotes wholeness' warmth

"How can one be warm alone?" (Eccl 4:11b)

Mutual dependence - If you and I chose to live alone, we get cold. Not cold physically but cold on the inside. We sense a loneliness, we sense a emptiness. But when we come together in Christian fellowship, there is warmth, there is wholeness, there is inspiration and there is mutual dependence one on the other.

So do yourself a favour. Join the Christian fellowship to experience in an emotional, social, and relational wholeness.

4. It imparts strength, stability and protection

"The threefold cord is not quickly broken." (Eccl 4:12)

When we come together in Christian fellowship, we are like a strong rope. Many strands intertwined and it gives us strength, stability and protection.

We are shielded together from the powers of darkness because, together we can be victorious.

So, if you are tempted to live by yourself, that's not healthy. You have to be part of a vital Christian fellowship.

5. You gain opportunities to see God's answers to prayer in the lives of others. 2 Thess. 1:3; 1 Thess. 3:11, 12.

In Christian fellowship an amazing privilege is we are able to pray for one another. And then God takes our prayers and provides the answer in the life of the one we are praying for.

6. You receive confrontation from others, making yourself less vulnerable to the hardening deceitfulness of sin.

“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” Hebrews 3:13

Today with social media and with all the modern gadgetry, it is very easy to be deceived by sin.

So the purpose of Christian fellowship is that we can look out for each other. We can call each other and check how we are doing; see whether we are fallen by the way side, as it were, because of the deceitfulness of sin.

7. You are freed to confess your sins to a brother or sister and benefit by their prayers for you.

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed” James 5:16

8. You grow in humility.

“Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another” 1 Peter. 5:5

9. You make the Gospel more visible to a dark world.

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35;

1Th. 4:9; Titus 3:3; 1John 3:11, 23; 1John 4:7, 11-12; 2John 5

10. We are able to bind the wounds of one another

Good Samaritan story - Luke 10:25-37

D. The Breakdown of Christian Fellowship

1. Gossip.

Church members talk about one another instead of talking to one another.

Let us not imitate Diotrephes (3 John 9-11) in ruining the reputation of someone else through gossip

2. Desire for positions

Some church members seek power in a church they can't get elsewhere. They are devious and dangerous. They must be courageously confronted. (3 John 9)

3. Self-serving church members

Some church members insist on getting their way for everything. Biblical church membership, however, is selfless and more concerned about others.

4. Prayerlessness (Prayer binds and bonds us together)

A church that does not pray together is likely to fragment into special interest groups.

5. Lack of godly leadership

A godly leader will guide, foster, inspire, and encourage all of us to be a part of Christian fellowship.

6. Worldliness (Introduction of worldly ideas and methods)

Worldliness gets us nowhere. If we try to imitate the world, we will become like them and we will lose our effectiveness.

7. Fear of confrontation

If you care for your brother, if you love your brother, and you see something that is detrimental to their spiritual or emotional or physical health, we should have the courage - lovingly, compassionately and at the right time - to be able to point it out to them and to walk with them to help them come out of it.

8. Unhealthy criticism

You, as a Christian, probably have a much greater ability to see weakness in other believers than to see strength. It is as if you use a magnifying glass when looking for weakness and a telescope when looking for grace.

9. Indifference, ignoring others; neglect; forming cliques

You ignore and you are indifferent to people who are desperately looking for a brother or sister to come along side of them; no one talks with them; they are ignored; and the chances are very high that they may not come back to the Church after that because they felt neglected.

10. Independence and isolation

If you are a person with an attitude of having a board in front of you which says, "Leave me alone,

don't bother with me. Just leave me alone", you need to repent. God didn't save us so that we will live isolated, independent lives. We have to be interdependent one with the other. That's what Christian fellowship is all about.

E) BUILDING BRIDGES of fellowship

"Don't erect walls; Build bridges."

- **C**onnect
- **C**ommunicate

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. (Ephesians 4:29)

What grace? The grace of perseverance.

Every sermon, every conversation, is a means of final salvation. There are no meaningless moments. Life is awesomely meaningful at every moment.

- **C**are and **C**oncern
- **C**omfort
- **C**onfront (**C**ORRECT wrong beliefs' and behavior)
- **C**onfess
- **C**ompliment
- **C**ounsel
- **C**all upon the Lord (Pray)

[Watch the full sermon here](#)

PROMISES 2020

**I will give them one heart,
and will put a new spirit within you.**

Ezekiel 11:19

**Go therefore, and make disciples
of all nations... behold, I am with you always.**

Matthew 28:19,20 ESV

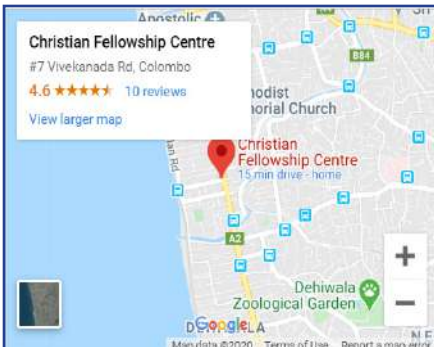
**I will fill this house with glory,
saith the LORD.**

Haggai 2:7

PROMISES 2020

FOR HE IS FAITHFUL THAT PROMISED. (Hebrews 10:23)

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CFC Colombo



Christian Fellowship Centre