



DIOCESE OF TIRUNELVELI
BETHESDA C.S.I. TAMIL CHURCH
PUNE
DABARUM



GOD'S PROMISE FOR THIS MONTH

கர்த்தராகிய தேவன் விளம்புவதைக் கேட்பேன்; அவர் தம்முடைய ஜனங்களுக்கும் தம்முடைய பரிசுத்தவாண்களுக்கும் சமாதானம் கூறுவார்;
அவர்களோ மதிக்கேட்டுக்குத் திரும்பாதிருப்பார்களாக. - சங்கீதம் 85:8

MESSAGE FOR THE MONTH

THE CHILDREN ARE SPIRITUAL BEINGS

Children are future of a society. In fact, children are the next generation church. In many local churches the children are ignored as they are not valued. However, there is a missionary movement that emerged in recent past termed as 4/14 Window. The understanding in the West is that those who came to Christ mostly, was between the age group of 4 and 14. Now, the awareness regarding children has increased in churches, missions and theological institutions.

Angry young Christians

One young Christian did not like to attend worship service. I tried to counsel him. One time he exploded in anger: "In the Sunday service, you say – 'all children get out.' Then when we become young; you say – 'all grown up children stay back.' When you want us to be out, we should be out and when you want us in, we should come in. What is this logic?" Somehow this young man has got an impression that the Sunday Church service is only for grown up ones. Children are excluded from worship. Once excluded from the community, he thought he was excluded forever. He had a hurt feeling towards the church. So, it is important to deal with children sensitively.

Children are Spiritual beings

The Bible teaches us that children are created by God Himself. Psalmist explodes in surprise and wonder: "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be" (Psalm 139: 13-16). God is involved in the creation of each and every child that is born in this world. As created being in the image of God, each child is a spiritual being. So, abortion is not an option for the disciples of Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual sensitivity in the womb (Luke 1:39-45)

John the Baptist, when he was in the womb leaped with joy hearing the greeting of Mary, who was pregnant with Lord Jesus Christ. "At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill

country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!" The unborn child could hear conversations, understand and respond to the same.

Tears of a child births a nation

Moses parents were compelled to obey the edict of Pharaoh that ordered them to throw new born boys into river Nile. They obeyed the edict in a creative way. They made a basket and placed Moses in it and left it in river Nile. "Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said" (Exodus 2:5,6). Pharaoh's daughter was moved with compassion seeing the feeble cry of Moses. Those tears moved the heart of her that changed the history of Children of Israel.

Boy King

The High Priest Jehoiada mentored seven year old Joash and made him the King of Judah (II Kings 11:21). It is not possible for a seven year old to rule a nation without divine wisdom and godly guidance and counsel. The King did well under the guidance of Johoiada, but later he was misled and became an evil king.

Wise girl

Miriam was a wise girl, prudent elder sister and spiritually sensitive. God endowed her with divine wisdom and courage. "His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him. Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said." Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for

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you?" "Yes, go," she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother" (Exodus 2:4-8). This was not pre-mediated scripted dialogue. The girl was concerned about her small brother who may die. May be she was praying standing ashore. Certainly, her prayer was answered. Pharaoh's daughter reached there and summoned her assistants to bring the basket and saw Moses in tears. Miriam steps near and offers her services to bring a mother to take care of the three old boy and brought their mother. God used Miriam to protect Moses who later delivers Israelites from the Egypt, a super power at that point of time.

Jesus in temple

At the age of twelve Lord Jesus went to the Temple with Mary and Joseph. However, he was deeply involved in discussion with religious leaders (Luke 2:46-47). Parents missed him and travelled ahead. Later they came back and discovered him in the temple. Scriptural knowledge and maturity is possible at the age of 12. Slave girl saves her tormentor (II Kings 5:1-14) An unnamed slave girl in Syria shows spiritual maturity. Instead of having mind to take revenge, this girl has the attitude of forgiveness towards her tormentor Naaman. The girl was deprived of her parents, family, nation and spiritual heritage by Naaman the Syrian Captain and his army. She had every right to be angry against Naaman and could have sought his decay and death by leprosy. This girl was different that she provides a vital information that would heal her tormentor. She directs desperate Naaman to go to Elisha, the prophet of God. This missionary slave changes the life of a pagan army commander.

Child Donor

The small boy sacrificially and willingly gave his lunch box to Lord Jesus Christ."Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" (John 6:9). Giving

is a spiritual task. Giving does not come naturally for human beings. People generally try to grab and not give. As a child, this boy would have loved his non-vegetarian lunch and would not have given it away simply. Being a spiritual boy he gave his precious possession to the Lord. His small contribution was the seed for one of the greatest miracles. Children part of spiritual activity in family Moses answered Pharaoh that the Israelites would go for worship as families including children (Exodus 10:9). Moses rejected the suggestion that the children be left from sacrifice and worship. Also in the Passover all the family members were present including children. In Nineveh all the citizens including children fasted and prayed for three days that saved the city from destruction (Jonah 3)

God speaks to children

Samuel is a great example, how God speaks to the children. Samuel did not even realize that God was calling him (I Samuel 3), only Eli mentored him to discern and listen to the Lord. It is amazing to see how God confides to a small child like Samuel his agony, secrets and future. Challenge Children are spiritual and sensitive beings. They should be included as part and parcel of the Covenant Community – the Church. Ignoring them because of age is not a biblical practice. Encouraging them to participate in all spiritual activities in the home and in the Church is very much essential. Children can praise and worship; understand Scripture; participate in the family altar; give sacrificially; do the Will of God; share the Gospel message.

STORY FOR THE MONTH

10 Famous Christian Martyrs

5. John Wycliffe (The Morning Star of the Reformation)

John Wycliffe (1330 -1384) was a theologian, philosopher, lay preacher and translator. John Wycliffe produced some of the first hand written English translations of the Bible and helped to make them widely available. He was an early critic of the Papacy and the clerical basis of the Catholic Church; Wycliffe argued scripture was primary source basis of Christianity. He is seen by many as the precursor for the later Protestant Reformation of Martin Luther.

John Wycliffe was born in the North Ridings, Yorkshire. His families were of Saxon origins. As a young man he moved to Oxford to study natural science, mathematics and theology. He studied at Balliol college, where he would later become the Master of Balliol. Wycliffe was most interested in theology and studying scripture.

He became known for being an excellent scholar with a thorough understanding of the law; gaining the



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attention of the Archbishop of Canterbury, he was made head of Canterbury Hall in 1365. When the Pope pressed England to send taxes, Wycliffe was instrumental in drafting a reply arguing that there was no basis for demanding a tribute from a foreign power. Years I have served Christ, and He never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" Steadfast in his stand for Christ, Polycarp refused to compromise his beliefs, and thus, was burned alive at the stake.

The pope, keen not to antagonize the English, soon withdrew his request.

In 1374, Wycliffe also served as a negotiator in the Peace Congress at Bruges – between England and France; this furthered his political influence and stature.

From his early days at Oxford, Wycliffe contended with various aspects of Catholic philosophy and influence. Initially, this was more abstract and philosophical, but increasingly he became critical of the actions and power that the church wielded. He argued that the clerics were not justified in having so much secular power – because they often acted in an immoral way and because the gospels didn't support it.

On his return from Bruges, with support from his patron John of Gaunt, he wrote tracts and books, expressing his views. (The most important was Summa Theologian) This included denunciations of collecting indulgences for the remission of sin. He also asserted the right of the King to take away property from the church, if justified.

Wycliffe became a popular preacher in London, and many reformers allied himself to his views. Though as might be expected, he also attracted increased criticism from those with powerful positions in the church, who were now threatened by Wycliffe's talk of reform. After calling for the secularization of English church property, his opponents argued he was guilty of blasphemy. Wycliffe had to defend

himself at Lambeth palace. With opinion split, he was forbidden to speak further on these matters.

However, with powerful backers, Wycliffe continued his reforming attempts. In particular, he began the very significant step of translating and writing out the New Testament in English. This was a radical step as it brought the gospels close to the ordinary person who could not understand Latin, and removed the Church as the 'interpreter'.

For the next few years Wycliffe continued to attack the Pope and the church hierarchy. The church sought to destroy the English versions of his bible, but the fact that so many copies survived suggest, that under his leadership, the movement to distribute the Bible in English was quite successful.

Wycliffe began to attract a group of followers – known as the Lollards. They spread Wycliffe's teaching and ideas throughout England. His political influence was such that he was even blamed for the peasant's revolt of 1381 – though he disapproved of it.

Attacks against Wycliffe continued until his death. But, supported by a sufficient number of people (especially in Oxford, and Parliament) he was never excommunicated or deprived of his position.

After retiring to Lutterworth, Wycliffe suffered a stroke on Dec 28, 1384 and died three days later.

20 years later, Wycliffe was condemned as a heretic and his books should be burned and his body exhumed and bones crushed. However, Wycliffe had left a profound mark on English and European thought. He had challenged the authority of the church and pope, laying the foundation for the future Reformation, which would reject the Papacy and promote the Bible. Also, his work to make an English version of the bible available was a critical moment in English Christianity.

BIRTH OF A SONG
(Safe In The Arms Of Jesus)

Many of Fanny Crosby's popular hymns and gospel songs were written backwards. Instead of writing a poem for someone else to set to music, she wrote quite a few of her stanzas to fit somebody's else's tunes.

One afternoon during the summer of 1868, William H. Doan, who composed music as a hobby, knocked at Fanny Crosby's door. When he was admitted, he rushed up to the blind poet and said:

"Miss Fanny, I have exactly forty minutes before my train leaves for Cincinnati, and I must take that train."

When she asked the reason of his call in view of that fact, he explained, "There is to be a great state-wide Sunday School convention in Cincinnati next month. In addition to the large delegations of adults, many young people and children are expected to be present. I want a new hymn which I can introduce for the first time at this convention."

Turning to the piano William Doan sat down and played his new tune in a rousing and stirring manner.

When he finished, Fanny Crosby said:

"Your music says 'Safe in the arms of Jesus.' What could be more appropriate for boys and girls at a Sunday School convention?"

Mr. Doane consulted his watch.

"Just thirty minutes left," he said, somewhat impatiently.

She replied, "You will have your hymn."

Going to her desk, she took out a piece of paper, found her pen, sat down and began to write.

After putting down several lines, she asked Mr. Doane to play his tune over a few times while she prepared her stanzas. As he played, she continued to write. When she was through, she folded

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the sheet of paper, placed it in an envelope and handed it to her friend.

“Here it is, William. You can read it on the train. Now, hurry. You don’t want to be late.”

He thanked her, said his “Goodbyes,” grabbed his hat and rushed for the carriage that was awaiting him in front of the house.

Enroute to Cincinnati on the train, he opened the envelope, took out the piece of paper and read what she had written to fit his music.

ARTICLES FOR THE MONTH



கருஸ்துவர் எங்கே உபாய்க்கொண்டிருக்கிறது?

“அநேக கிறிஸ்தவர்கள், ஒரு சபையில் அங்கத்தினராக இருக்கவேண்டுமென்று மாத்திரம் விரும்புகிறார்களே அல்லாமல் வேதத்தில் சொல்லப் பட்டிருக்கும் அல்லது அதன்படி போதிக்கப்படும் சத்தியத்தின்படி நடக்க மனதற்றவர்களாயிருக்கின்றனர். வேத சத்தியத்தின் பிரதிபலிப்பு அவர்களுடைய வாழ்க்கையில் இல்லை. இதன் விளைவாக சபைக்குள் “உலகம்” புகுந்துவிட்டது (INFILTRATED). சபையில் நடக்கிற அநேக காரியங்களில் “உலகமே” பிரதிபலிப்பதைக் காணமுடிகிறது. இந்த நாட்களில் சபையிலும் பிரசங்கபீடத்திலும் (PULPIT) மாயமாலம் (HYPOCRISY) காணப்படுகிறது. முதலாம் நூற்றாண்டில் இயேசுகிறிஸ்துவைப் பின்பற்றியவர்கள் தங்களைத் தாங்களே வெறுத்து அவர்களுடைய சிலுவையைச் சுமந்து பின்பற்ற ஆயத்தமாயிருந்தார்கள். இன்று சபை அங்கத்தினர்களை அப்படிச் செய்ய நாம் கேட்பதுமில்லை. சபை அங்கத்தினர்களில் பலர் வெளிப்படையாகவே பாவத்தில் வாழ்கின்றனர். அவர்களை நல்லொழுக்கப்படுத்தும் திறனையும் சபை இழந்துவிட்டது. இவற்றின் விளைவாக சமுதாயத்தில் நம்முடைய சாட்சியை இழந்து விட்டோம். ஆவிக்குரிய நித்திரை மயக்கத்திலிருக்கும் (SPIRITUAL SLUMBER) சபையை தட்டி எழுப்பவேண்டிய காலகட்டத்திற்குள் வந்திருக்கிறோம். அவர்களை பூமியிலுள்ளவைகளையல்ல, மேலானவைகளை நாடும்படி விழிப்புணர்வுகளை உண்டாக்கவேண்டும். இந்த வீழ்ச்சிக்கு முக்கியமான காரணம், சபையாருக்கு பரிசுத்தஆவியின் வல்லமை இல்லாமையே (ABSENCE OF THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT). சபை மதவழிபாட்டு முறைமைகளிலிருந்து (RELIGIOSITY) ஆன்மீக நிலைக்குத் (SPIRITUALITY) திரும்பவேண்டும். உண்மையையும் பொய்யையும் சல்லடையில் போட்டு சலித்து உண்மை பிரித்தெடுக்கப்படும் கடைசி நாட்களுக்குள் வந்திருக்கிறோம். விழிப்படையுங்கள்.”

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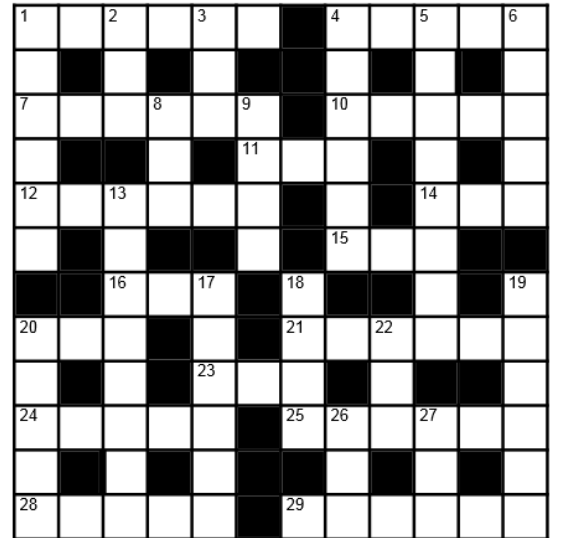
BIBLE QUIZ FOR THE MONTH

Across

- 1 A priest of Midian (6)
- 4 Red Sea parter (5)
- 7 Blustery (6)
- 10 One in charge (5)
- 11 Death (3)
- 12 City where Paul preached (6)
- 14 Type of testament (3)
- 15 Scarlet (3)
- 16 Atmosphere (3)
- 20 Possess (3)
- 21 Cross to bear (6)
- 23 Adversary (3)
- 24 One of Job's friends (5)
- 25 Gives in (6)
- 28 Have a dispute (5)
- 29 Like God (6)

Down

- 1 Fairly (6)
- 2 Number of men crucified with Christ (3)
- 3 Male sheep (3)
- 4 Unlawful killing (6)
- 5 Magnificent (8)
- 6 Stable bedding (5)
- 8 Decay (3)
- 9 A.D. 70, for example (4)
- 13 Status (8)
- 17 Type of city (6)
- 18 Follow the rules (4)
- 19 Togetherness (6)
- 20 Alpha's counterpart (5)
- 22 Deeply regret (3)
- 26 Place to stay (3)
- 27 Falsehood (3)



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