

Interview

Os Guinness

# Fountain of Life

## Jesus is the answer

If Jesus is the Answer...  
**What is the Question?**

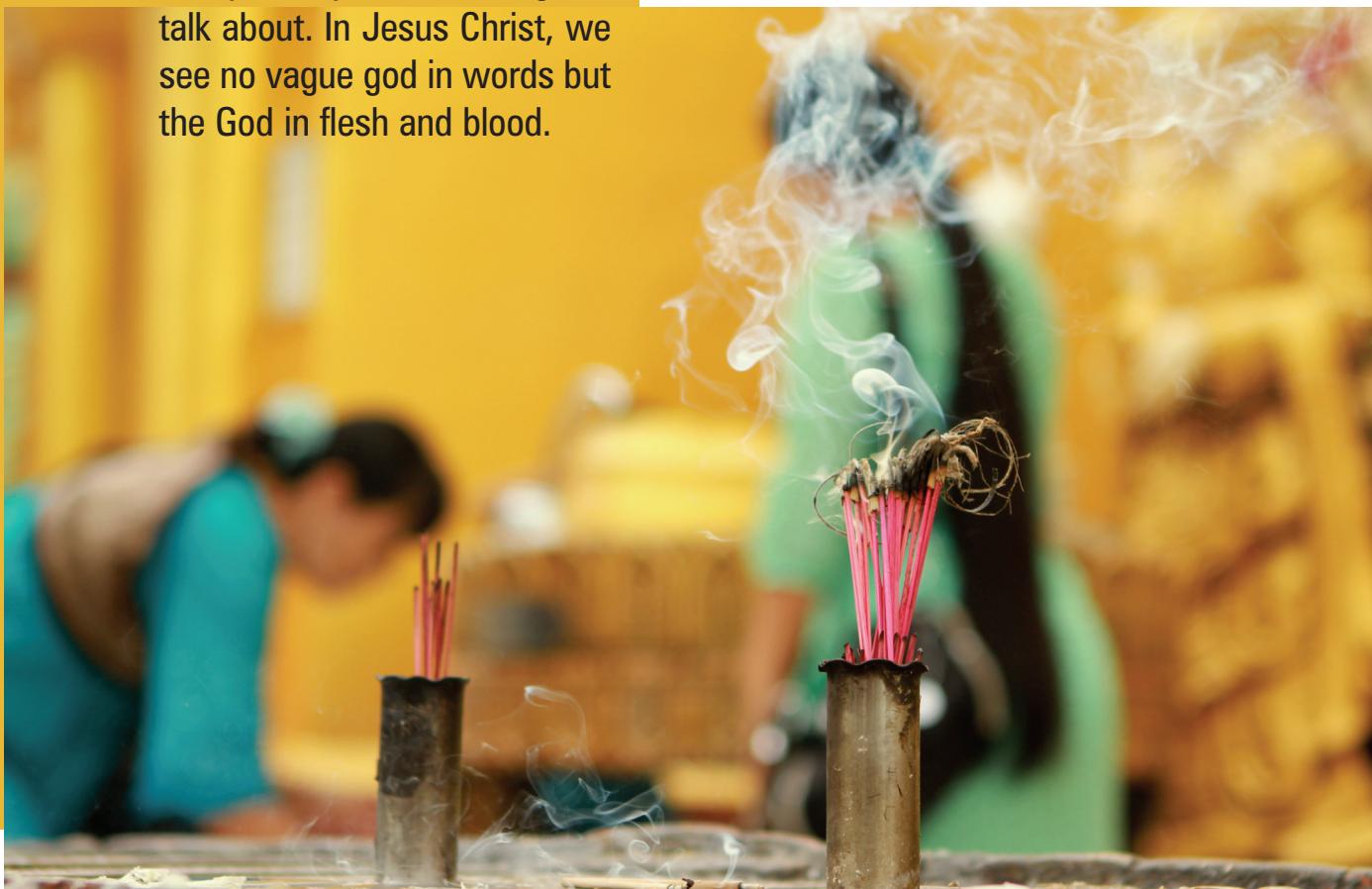
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A picture is worth a thousand words. While every religion talks about a Supreme Being out there and the human need for God, it was God of the Bible who became flesh and came to live among men. This is the picture of the Word [God], which is worth a million words that philosophies and religions talk about. In Jesus Christ, we see no vague god in words but the God in flesh and blood.

**People Focus**  
India



**When man embarks on a  
journey to search God,  
he only finds religion.  
But when God comes in  
search of man,  
It is Christmas.**

Luke 19:10

In the spring of 1962, during the peak of her affair with John F. Kennedy, Marilyn Monroe fantasised that the president would divorce his wife Jackie and marry her.

She asked her best friend Jeanne Carmen,  
"Can't you see me as the First Lady?"

~Parade October 1991.

## Wrath of Love Remembering JFK after 50 years

According to a new book, Marilyn Monroe called the White House and spoke to Mrs. Kennedy, telling her of the affair with her husband. Mrs. Kennedy reportedly replied: "Marilyn, you'll marry Jack [JFK] that's great. And you'll move into the White House and you'll assume the responsibilities of first lady, and I'll move out and you'll have all the problems."<sup>1</sup>

However, Marilyn did not enter the White House and Jacqueline Kennedy could not continue in the White House as John F Kennedy made a permanent exit from both the White House and this world prematurely before his term.

The world remembered John Fitzgerald Kennedy this November on his 50<sup>th</sup> death anniversary. No American president was honoured and remembered as was JF Kennedy around the globe. He was a darling dude of many a nation. The Big Ben in London does not toll except for the English. But it did for JFK. On the 22, of November 1963, the Indian Parliament was in full session with Chief Ministers of all States when the news came about Kennedy's assassination. The session stopped for Kennedy and India declared a national holiday which it does only for its national leaders. No American president's funeral was attended by so many international leaders as they did for JFK. The list of such rare honours can go on.

The president, who charmed a nation and wooed its women, down played the very trust of his people and reduced the reputation of White House. Stories of his escapades with women still haunt the Americans who loved him dearly.

Writing on John F Kennedy's Women, Naomi Wolf says, Kennedy's reputation has been damaged by tales and testimonials about the scores of women who cycled through White House bedrooms (or hotel rooms when he travelled). It was also rumoured that JF Kennedy married twice divorced Durie Malcolm before marrying Jacqueline Bouvier.

Affairs and womanising were common to the Kennedy boys. Joseph Patrick Kennedy, father of John F Kennedy himself was a complex person whose political career was marred as controversial and his personal life as a womaniser. Consider the premature death of three of his four sons; Joe P. Kennedy died in a plane crash, JF Kennedy assassinated, Robert Kennedy assassinated. Several of the Kennedys died

unnaturally including JFK's son John F Kennedy Jr., in a plane crash. Consider these tragedies termed as 'Kennedy Curse.' Could one say the seed produced the fruit? We can tell the number of seeds in a mango, but who can tell the number mangoes in that one single seed.

Nature echoes only what has been sent into it. We are who we are in death; death closes us all but not before giving out to the world who and what we actually were. Greying years invite respect to men and death makes everyone reverential. Nobody speaks in the negation of a dead man at the funeral and memorial. But this does not mean the wrongs one lived with would be buried with him in death. Cruel though, this is false. Their deeds haunt us like a phantom in memory as long as the human memory lasts, though not daily but when the anniversaries arrive. Books mutely illumine their lives but history roars their lives either in the positive or in the negative.

Love is a weapon and a powerful one. When rightly handled, it can work wonders. However, when love unleashes its wrath, the results are colossal. Nature has no pet children and life has none as favourites. They only give back what has been given into them. Each of us are both a fruit and seeds, and my we have the simple wisdom to know the difference between the right and the wrong to live and finish our lives strong.

1.[<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/marilyn-monroe-was-john-f-kennedys-one-mistress-who-jackie-kennedy-could-not-ignore-book-20130805-2r8fv.html#ixzz2m82IJAL9>]



**Fountain of Life** (FoL) is an inspirational, interdenominational, apolitical (non-political) contemporary missions magazine published quarterly from, Visakhapatnam, AP., India.

FoL includes articles, messages, thoughtful comments and relevant news written from a Christian perspective thereby bringing an awareness of missions and missionary endeavours. The articles are aimed at challenging the readers with the issues and happenings on the missionary frontiers and thus impact their spiritual lives to take up missions as a lifestyle.

#### Our Vision:

To be an effective tool committed to inspire, inform, invigorate and encourage the the body of Christ to take up missions as a lifestyle.

#### Our Mission Statement:

In pursuit of awakening a missionary spirit.

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**Fountain of Life** (FoL) is a quarterly magazine circulated among Churches, Christian organisations, Bible colleges and university students, in India and overseas. Column viewpoints are of its respective authors, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the FoL management or staff.

We welcome free-lance contribution of any article on missions and missionary work in India and abroad. FoL being a missions magazine aims at keeping a balance of 60/40 per cent of missions and other articles. Inspiring articles, first hand miracles experienced in challenging situations and other related articles that help Christian growth can be sent to us. However, the final decision to accept or reject depends on the editorial team. It is preferred that the articles be accompanied with good quality photographs in color/black and white. You may send them by email too. Digital photographs must be in 300 DPI and in Tiff / Corel Draw/JPG format preferably.

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## From the Editor

### "We live once and never twice."

*Arabian Nights*

Christmas is not a festival, it is a celebration. It is not an anniversary we celebrate, it is the Life we celebrate. There is no point looking at life and gazing the stars. It is those who grab life that make it the best. Life is too short to make any random choices. One life and one choice, the rest is either you enjoy the gift of life or face judgement.

Yes, we live only once and never twice. Given the time for humans on the earth, we have not the luxury to gamble much with time and truth while there is enough evidence to seek and find that truth. The wise understand the stakes, as did Blasie Pascal; "Belief is a wise wager. Granted that faith cannot be proved, what harm will come to you if you gamble on its truth and it proves false?" The subject of this issue's Cover Story is one that is close to my heart. At one point of time, it felt like my entire life depended on this subject, "What is life's biggest question?" While every religion seems to have had answers, what questions these religions were answering, I did not understand. I hope you will find not only the right questions to your life but real answer too.

Some of the answers Os Guinness gaven in his interview to Team FOL were though provocative, yet came with profound insights. Each of the columns, the Family time, are all a treat again.

As we prepare for a New 2014, let us look back not at the mile stones we crossed, but the moments we left behind as foot prints in someone's life beginning with our own families.

Merry Christmas

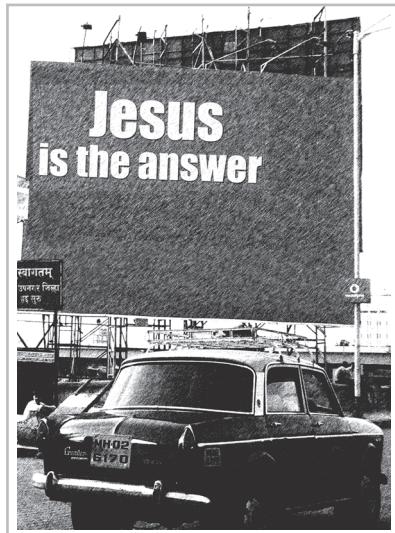
  
Sunny Joseph P.  
**Editorial**

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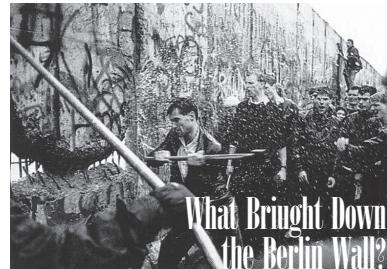
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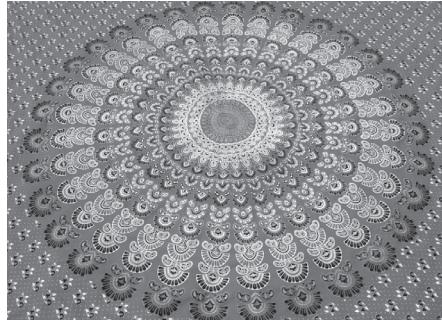
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# Weaving a Glorious Tapestry



**S**o now, let me ask you a question. Why shouldn't I just stay home when the church is gathering together, plug in a worship CD, and worship the Lord privately in my home? After all, there are some great worship CDs available these days, and I can get better quality music out of my CD player than I get when I go to the congregation. So why go to church? Why not stay home and worship with the CD?

Here's one reason: *CDs follow straight lines.* CDs go through their songs one after the other—boom, boom, boom. You'll never find the river with your CD player. You may get blessed a bit, but you'll not swim in the waters of the Ezekiel 47 river. To find the river, you've got to move past the linear movement of a CD and get into the flowing, creative waters of corporate worship.

## CD Syndrome

The levels of musicianship in the body of Christ have improved dramatically in the past 25 years. If you were to rent a time machine and take a trip back to your average worship service in America 20 or 25 years ago, you would experience culture shock. The levels of musicianship were a far cry from what they are today. What is to account for this phenomenal acceleration in the church's musical expressions of recent years?

The answer, I'm convinced, is Integrity's Hosanna Music, Vineyard Music, Maranatha! Music, Hillsong and Worship Together. And a number of other worship CD-producing companies.

Here's what happened. People would turn on the worship CD in their car on their way to church, and the whole car would be swaying from side to side as the passengers would jive to the music and participate in the joy of the excellent recording. Then, they'd step into church and get depressed at the dysfunctional mess on the platform. Then, they'd step back into their cars and jive all the way home.

The worship leaders were in for a rude wake-up call. "Hey," they finally realized, "we're competing with the CD!" So somebody said, "Maybe we should practice." The worship ministries of our nation began to practice just to save face before the people. The Lord honored it, and the level of

**Bob Sorge**

musicianship in most churches began to skyrocket. Pretty soon many worship teams were able to keep pace with the CDs that were coming out.

But now we have another problem in the church, a problem that I call "a CD syndrome." The quality of worship is so polished and smooth in many of our churches that you could actually record Sunday morning worship and sell the CDs! The intros are tight, the modulations are smooth, the harmonies are impeccable, the musicianship is flawless, the segues are impressive, and the endings are a work of art.

With just one problem. I don't come to church for CD quality music. I come to church for something totally different. I come to the house of God because I want to enter into the divine dance, breathing, living, dynamic love exchange between the Bridegroom and the Bride. I come to the house of prayer because *I want the river!*

We assemble with God's people because we don't want to miss the glories of the river of God. We never know when we'll hit the river, so we'll keep coming week after week, taking our chances and risking disappointment. "Not today. Oh well. Maybe next time." So we keep coming back to the place of corporate worship, hoping it will happen. Hoping we'll touch a little of heaven on earth. Hoping we'll find the river. We avoid being absent because we don't want to be like the apostle Thomas on Resurrection Day—Jesus showed up to the meeting, but he was too busy or distracted to be there. When Jesus shows up I want to be there! So I'll hazard a thousand disappointments, if need be, in order to be present when the glory of God thunders loose in the midst of God's people.

## The Tapestry of Worship

Each event of congregational worship is an un-replicated, one-of-a-kind, never-been-seen-before-in-the-history-of-the-planet, never-to-be-seen-again, breathing love exchange with our Beloved. Why? Because never before, in the history of the world, has this specific group of people gathered together in this way, with all their existing mindsets, attitudes, and the emotional trappings of their current life issues. So when we express ourselves together before the throne of God, the

nature and themes of our expressions will be different from any other worship service that has ever transpired. When this group of saints touches the heart of God, a tapestry of worship will begin to emerge that will be absolutely unique in its emphasis and flavor.

Every worship service is like the on-site formation of a new tapestry. Together we are producing something that is unique, living, immediate, and fresh. When the service starts, nobody knows how the tapestry will end. But as we enter the river of God, out of the synergism of corporate worship begins to emerge a tapestry of affection that glitters and shines with compelling beauty.

The emphasis, tone, and direction of every worship service is totally unique. If we'll allow the worship time to come to its completion, we will come away with a clear awareness of having received His love, having given Him our love, and having been empowered to go out into the world through His enabling grace. When worship's tapestry is finished, everyone comes away with a clear understanding of what the Spirit is saying to the church.

For the tapestry of corporate worship to be complete, we need *everybody*'s thread. To the degree that some people's thread is absent due to passivity, to that degree the corporate worship experience falls short of its potential fullness.

- The worship leader must contribute his or her thread. If the worship leader is too confined to the song list, and is too intimidated to step out of the boat and go with the river of God, the tapestry of worship will fall short.
- The pastors and elders must lend their threads. If they're thinking, "I'm off duty; it's the worship leader's turn," then they will not be leaning into the Spirit for that contribution that their threads might make.
- We need the threads from the singers on the worship team. If they're telling themselves, "I don't have a prophetic anointing on my life, so I'm just going to sing the songs as they've been written," then we will miss what could have been. Listen to me, all you singers in the house of God: You have a prophetic anointing! Whether you're totally comfortable with it or not, God has called you to prophesy in song in the courts of the Lord (1 Samuel 10:5-6). If the insecurities of your flesh are winning out, then repent, take out your thread, and weave your part of the tapestry.
- The prophetic musicians have a thread to weave. "But I'm not prophetic," complains a musician. Sorry, it's too late. God has already anointed you to play your instrument under a prophetic anointing (1 Chronicles 25:1). With the calling came the grace to fulfill that calling. Prophetic singers and musicians, you often face a choice: either play it safe and stay back in the shallows of your comfort zones or launch out into a prophetic anointing that takes us over our heads in the river. If you hold back, you rob us of what could have been.

Every worship service is like the on-site formation of a new tapestry. Together we are producing something that is unique, living, immediate, and fresh. When the service starts, nobody knows how the tapestry will end. But as we enter the river of God, out of the synergism of corporate worship begins to emerge a tapestry of affection that glitters and shines with compelling beauty.

- And last but not least, the congregation has the greatest contribution to make to the tapestry. Each saint has his or her own thread. If any believers are disengaged or withdrawn, their threads will be greatly missed, and we will never enter into the full reality of what we could have experienced in the river of God. For the tapestry to be complete, we need everyone's thread!

Because of this dynamic, today's worship leaders display a lower personal profile and a more open hand than their predecessors. They realize they must provide on-ramps for others to make their contribution to the worship service, which is often done by affording brief moments of pause in their leadership of the worship service. By displaying a lower profile, worship leaders allow the Holy Spirit to bring impetus to the meeting through other members in the congregation or worship team upon whom He is moving.

Corporate worship is so much more than a slick display of CD-quality music. It is a breathing love-exchange with the Bridegroom in which every member contributes his or her part. When Jesus contributes His part, worship then becomes an explosive encounter with a holy God. Before us is the potential to have such a clear and compelling meeting with God that we all remember it vividly for days—the emphasis of the tapestry etched clearly upon our minds, and our hearts empowered to respond more freely and fully to Him in obedience and love.

We won't be satisfied until our corporate worship times become unforgettable tapestries that are woven in the unpredictable fluidity of the Holy Spirit's river.

[This entire book in English can be downloaded for free at:<http://oasishouse.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/FollowingTheRiver4th.pdf>

Bob Sorge is a teacher and author. Having served as a senior pastor for thirteen years, Bob now travels domestically and abroad. Bob and his wife, Marci, live in Kansas City, Missouri with their three children and six grandchildren].



# JEWS in NEWS



## Himalayas Get 'Israel Trail'

Israeli Embassy in Nepal initiates 3-kilometer walkway for hikers on Asian mountain range named after Jewish state

Thousands of Israeli hikers visit Nepal every year and go on treks on the Himalaya Mountains. From now on, they will be able to feel closer to home with the inauguration of a trail named after the State of Israel.

The track is 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) long and passes through an enchanted forest overlooking the snowy mountain tops of the Himalayas.

The trail's inauguration ceremony was held in the presence of Israeli Ambassador to Nepal Hanan Goder, the Nepalese minister responsible for national planning, and Aviv Eisenband, director of forestry and professional development at KKL-JNF.

The "Israel Trail" was paved in the Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park near Katmandu. The entrance to the track was unveiled during the ceremony, which was also attended by some 200 Israeli hikers and members of the Shalom Club – Nepalese citizens who participated in an education program in Israel and have since been connected to the Jewish state. [<http://www.jewsnews.co.il/2013/12/02/himalayas-get-israel-trail/>]

## Israel Helped India In 1971 War, Reveals Book



India may not have had diplomatic ties with Israel but New Delhi quietly sought and got arms from Tel Aviv as it prepared to go to war with Pakistan in 1971, a book has revealed.

The book, 1971, by scholar Srinath Raghavan offers fresh insights into the 14-day war that led to the creation of Bangladesh. Raghavan accessed the PN Haksar papers maintained at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in New Delhi. These papers document startling aspects of a war that is probably India's finest military moment but has not

been documented adequately. A diplomat, Haksar was also an adviser to the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. [<http://www.jewsnews.co.il/2013/11/02/israel-helped-india-in-1971-war-reveals-book/>]

## Ancient Jewish Altar Found In Shilo



An ongoing archaeological dig in the ancient Jewish village of Shilo in Samaria (Shomron) has turned up a stone altar dating back thousands of years.

The altar is believed to date back to the period from roughly 1,200 BCE to 600 CE known as the Iron Age.

More specifically, archaeologists dating it to what some Israeli researchers call the "Israelite era" – the period of time after the nation of Israel entered the land of Israel, and before the destruction of the First Temple.

The altar is 60 centimeters by 60 centimeters, with a height of 40 centimeters, and was found on the southern edge of the site of ancient Shilo.

It had been used in the construction of a Byzantine-era structure, however, markings on the stone indicated its use in religious ceremonies prior to its use as building material.

Shilo was home to the Tabernacle brought with the Jews as they entered the land of Israel. It served as a site of religious pilgrimage until King Solomon's construction of the First Temple in Jerusalem centuries later.

In the summer of 2013 archaeologists revealed that they had found the remains of the Biblical Israelites' Tabernacle site. [<http://www.jewsnews.co.il/2013/11/20/ancient-jewish-altar-found-in-shilo/>]

# Praise: God's ARMOR ON Hell



by Dr. David Brown

## Praise is: An Array of Armor

Isaiah 61:3 commands us to “Put on the garment of praise for the Spirit of Heaviness.” Now, we know that praise is spiritual warfare; therefore the garment of praise could logically be defined as the garment of spiritual warfare. What is the garment of spiritual warfare? Ephesians 6:13-18 holds the answer for that question: “Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” This is the garment of praise.

Jesus promises us, “And behold, I will send forth upon you what My Father has promised; but remain in the city (Jerusalem) until you are clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49 Amp). Whose garments are these anyway? Again, the answer is in the word, “For (the Lord) put on righteousness as a breastplate or coat of armor, and salvation as a helmet upon His head; He put on garments of vengeance for clothing, And was clad with zeal (and

furious, divine jealousy) as a cloak. According as their deeds deserve, so He will repay wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; On the foreign islands and coast lands He will make compensation” (Isa. 59:17-18). To put on praise is to arm yourself with the same exact armor of Christ, The Living Word! We put on the armor to fight when we praise the Lord! The word for being endued, or clothed with “power” from on high, is the Greek word *dunamis*, which the word dynamite is derived from in English (Luke 24:49).

So, our armor is explosive. We are clothed with dynamite-explosive power, ready to be a walking spiritual bomber against the unseen realm of spirits and fallen angels! When you release the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit through the body, situations come together and do not fly apart. This is exactly what happens when we praise the Lord. The broken things are scattered, and the lost things return to us and come together in the Spirit!

When we are fishing in the natural world, we use a single rod and line or a multiple line, called a trot line. However, as we fish for men, we use the dynamite of the Holy Spirit; and the concussion of the ‘explosion of holy praise brings the fish (men) to the top of the water; we simply gather them up! This is the power of DYNAMIC PRAISE!

### **Praise is: A Tumultuous Victory Celebration, Humiliating the Enemy**

Look at this revelation of the power of praise: “Save us O Lord our God and gather us from among the heathen to give thanks unto Thy holy name and to triumph in Thy praise” (Ps 106:47). In ancient times when a war was won, the victorious army would bring home the captives, spoils, and defeated opposing generals and kings from the war. The triumph usually took place in the capital city of the victorious army.

The celebration took the form of a victory procession or parade. The citizens of the capital city would welcome their triumphant armies back home with shouts of welcome and glory, as the dazed and defeated captives and vanquished generals were being dragged down the street with chains extending from the conqueror’s triumphal chariot. At the end of the triumph, the conquering general would present his enemies and captives to the king of his empire. The opposing general’s cloak would be torn, much like the present-day dressing down of our military (ripping off chevrons and stripes from the sleeves, and tearing off ribbons and medals). Then, the defeated general’s sword was displayed as it had been broken. At that time, the conquered general was knocked to the ground before the victorious king; the conquering general would then place his foot on the conquered general’s head as the city broke out in a wild crescendo of praise!

This is what happened in heaven when Jesus ascended up on high. Christ led the captives of the paradise side of Hell (Sheol), united in His captivity; He gave gifts unto men and destroyed Satan’s capacity to rule over us ever again! Christ disarmed Satan and lead him as a defeated foe; He utterly spoiled him and his kingdom and destroyed all his works (1 John 3:8; Ps 24:7-9; Ps 107:16; Matt 16:18). Now, Colossians 2:14-15 says emphatically about Satan’s total defeat, “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it.” But now, our position in Christ assures us that we triumph with Christ: “Now thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ” (2 Cor. 2:14). We re-enact the “defeat” celebration and the spoiling, stripping, and humiliation of Satan as we continually triumph in PRAISE!



To put on praise is to arm  
yourself with the same exact  
armor of Christ,  
The Living Word!  
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The word for being endued, or  
clothed with “power” from on  
high, is the Greek word  
*dunamis*, which the word  
dynamite is  
derived from in English.



# If You Do Not Sleep **There is No Tomorrow**



**S**o, sleep is essential. But why does one need sleep in the night? The simple response is, ‘to take rest.’

When we sleep in the night, it indicates we have toiled through the day and we are reposing to be refreshed to get to work again the next day. Imagine someone who sleeps throughout the day and yet goes to bed in the night. This is fine if this is just once in a while practice. But if this a lifestyle, the sight of such a man sleeping through the day and night is abhorring. It indicates something abnormal unless there are medical reasons to such a practice.

The ones who deserve rest at the end of the day are those who work through the day; hard work through the day ensures good sleep in the night. Research suggests eight hours work and eight hours sleep with a plus or minus here and there. But the standard average ration is 8:8.

Sleep, though we all take it for granted, is actually what we all earn. What is first earned and enjoyed has a far greater satisfaction and a sense of fulfilment compared to what is been given freely. The problem occurs when we think that we are entitled to rest and so we take it for granted and go to bed without the slightest thought of what we have done to earn not just sleep but the refreshing rest in the sleep. Remember, though sleep and rest are almost the same, technically speaking they are not.

By birth each of us is equipped for an assignment. For one specific assignment that God intended for our lives. The second greatest decision we make after making a decision for Christ is to find that definite assignment or purpose of our existence. Once we grab that purpose, our whole life becomes one great adventure where each passing day builds on the other in fulfilling that definite purpose. But the key is to discover that purpose; unless which we would be like a ship on the ocean without a rudder where, even the captain of the ship can do nothing.

Psalmist David says, “*A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.*” If a thousand years are just a day for God, imagine that 2000 years of the recent history are but two days for God and to imagine the average life span of 70 years of humans. David continues in verse 6, “*In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth*

*up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.*" The Hebrew word for *flourish* is *tsoots* which means 'twinkle.' Consider the array of famous world leaders in the recent 2000 years history; rich, powerful, beautiful and famous. All such lives including ours are considered as just a 'twinkle.' The word for wither in Hebrew is *yaw-bashe* which means ashamed, confused and disappointed.

How finite man is. He is now and here, great and pompous but the next moment he is gone, confused, disappointed and ashamed. We do not know what the dead would feel after their death but the analogy is clear. As hard work through the day ensures good sleep so does a righteous life ensures contentment to our greying years. The same that applies for a life well lived; death brings no disappointments, no confusion and shame.

We live in this world for our egos and our logos but there is more to life than just our careers, our property, our name and fame. None of these go to heaven yet we toil our whole life building up and when life echoes negatively at the end, we are disappointed even before we wither.

The sound advice David continues in the same psalm is, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply *our* hearts unto wisdom. He continues in verse 14 to 'satisfy us early.' The word early in Hebrew is *boker* meaning dawn or morning which means in the early or the youthful days of our life.

If we think we are entitled for sleep and rest every day, we got it all wrong. On the other hand, when we realise that sleep must be earned, rest becomes a reward of the day's toil in fulfilling that one definite purpose we are all created for. The day we



If we think we are entitled for sleep and rest every day, we got it all wrong. On the other hand, when we realise that sleep must be earned, rest becomes a reward of the day's toil in fulfilling that one definite purpose we are all created for. The day we lose this perspective is the day we produce fruitless days and end up living a fruitless life.

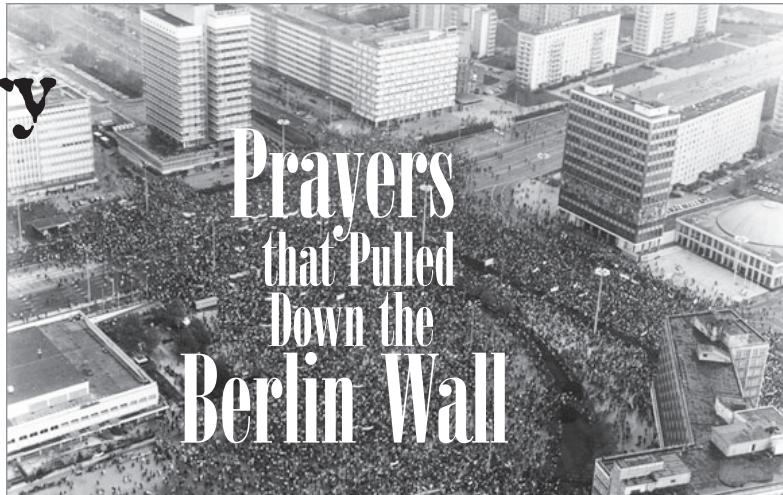


lose this perspective is the day we lost the purpose of our existence. The result is, we produce fruitless days and end up living a fruitless life. The Bible warns, "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

Someone foolishly said, You don't get nothing from sleep but a dream. Psalm 127 says, "*for so he giveth his beloved sleep.*" There is more to this passage than meets the eye. The Hebrew word for giveth is *naw-than* which means appoint, ascribe or assign. When we consider the 'God appointed sleep,' which is the direct reward of living a purposeful life in accordance with His plan, the rewards are priceless. Think of Adam and his sleep that came after a long toil of naming all the animals that God created. He earned his sleep and his rest brought him his life's partner and the first woman, Eve. Life turned around for Adam after that God appointed and God rewarding sleep. Jewish tradition believes that while we sleep, God is creating and recreating the universe every one-millionth second in ways we do not understand with our finite mind.

Take a keen look at how we spend our days that the end of our life may not disappoint us. If we do not really work on our purpose every day, we do not earn our sleep. "If we do not sleep," Lubavitcher Rebbe says, "there would be no tomorrow. Life would be a single, seamless today. Our every thought and deed would be an outgrowth of all our previous thoughts and deeds. There would be no new beginnings in our lives, for the very concept of a new beginning would be alien to us."

# Stories Lost History



## Prayers that Pulled Down the Berlin Wall

Prayer is a strong wall and fortress of the church;  
it is a goodly Christian weapon.

~Martin Luther

**P**rayer is a goodly weapon, and when rightly used for the right purpose and in the right perspective, the results are not earthly, but heavenly, and nothing less than heaven on earth. The Berlin Wall, that stood strong and stubborn as a symbol of human hatred and hostility for nearly three decades in Germany, came crumbling down. The fall of the Wall symbolized the fall of Communist ideology in the face of kneeling prayer warriors who prayed for a decade every Monday unfailingly in the historic 800-year-old St. Nicholas Church, Leipzig.

Leipzig, the 'praying city,' was nicknamed the 'Hero City' after the Berlin Wall fell. No communist regime, no secret police, no death threat could stop the Church from taking what they claimed in prayer and conquered on their knees. With the devil's agents watching and heaven bending down to witness, the spectacle of 100,000 praying citizens walked with only candles and banners—No, no sword and no spilled blood!—and conquered the city, bringing the Wall of Berlin down, down, down, never to rise again. Remember the Book of Joshua in the Bible? Joshua of old brought down the walls of Jericho with no weapons but the Word of God. Just as God crumbled, burned and buried the walls of Jericho through Joshua, so He did to the Wall of Berlin through the prayers of His people. As the German reformer Martin Luther reminded, 'prayer' is still the 'strong wall and fortress of the Church.' Today, one can see the Berlin Wall, or rather, parts of it, only in the museums.



The Berlin Wall was a barrier constructed by the German Democratic Republic [GDR, East Germany], starting on August 13, 1961, that completely cut off West Berlin from surrounding East Germany and from East Berlin by land. The barrier included guard towers placed along large concrete walls, which circumscribed a wide area later known as the "death strip." The Eastern Bloc claimed that the wall was erected to protect its population from fascist elements conspiring to prevent the "will of the people" in building a socialist state in East Germany. In practice, the Wall served to prevent the massive emigration and defection that marked Germany and the communist Eastern Bloc during the post-World War II period.

After the end of the war in Europe in 1945, Berlin received large numbers of refugees from the Eastern provinces. The victorious powers divided the city into four sectors, analogous to the occupation zones into which Germany was divided. The sectors of the Western Allies [the United States, the United Kingdom and France] formed West Berlin, while the Soviet sector formed East Berlin. [Agreement to divide Berlin". FDR-Library. Retrieved 18 August 2008.]

All four Allies shared administrative responsibilities for Berlin. However, in 1948, when the Western Allies extended the currency reform in the Western zones of Germany to the three western sectors of Berlin, the Soviet Union imposed a blockade on the access routes to and from West Berlin, which lay entirely inside Soviet-controlled territory. In 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany was founded in West Germany, while the Marxist-Leninist German Democratic Republic was proclaimed in East Germany.

The founding of the two German states increased Cold War tensions. East Germany proclaimed East Berlin, described as 'Berlin,' as its capital...The West German government, meanwhile, established itself provisionally in Bonn. [Berlin

official website; History after 1945". *City of Berlin*. Retrieved 8 April 2009.]

As a result of the political and economic tensions brought on by the Cold War, on 13 August 1961, East Germany began the building of the Berlin Wall between East and West Berlin and similar barriers around West Berlin. Berlin was completely divided. The West Berlin city government sometimes referred to it as the 'Wall of Shame.'



**A decade before October 9, 1989, Christians in Leipzig began gathering in the 800-year-old St. Nicholas Church for prayer and political talk. The 'Monday prayer meetings,' said to be the largest regular meetings in Germany,**

**attracted hundreds and then thousands of people.**





The legendary 800-year-old St. Nicholas Church, Leipzig

demarcated border between East and West Germany came to symbolise the 'Iron Curtain' that separated Western Europe and the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War.

### **The Legacy of Leipzig**

The Leipzig region, in what later became the Eastern bloc, was the arena of the 1813 Battle of Leipzig between Napoleonic France and an allied coalition of Prussia, Russia, Austria, and Sweden; it ended Napoleon's presence in Germany, which ultimately led to his first exile on Elba. Goethe, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sebastian Bach's three famous sons, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, and Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach, were the products of

Leipzig University. Johann Sebastian Bach himself served Prince Leopold in Leipzig as his music director.

Leipzig later played a significant role in instigating the fall of communism in Eastern Europe through the events which took place in and around St. Nicholas Church and the Christians who prayed through the fall of one of the world's greatest modern-day barriers, the Berlin Wall that stood for nearly three decades as a stiff and stubborn symbol of human hatred and hostility.

### **Monday Prayer Meetings**

A decade before October 9, 1989, Christians in Leipzig began gathering in the 800-year-old St. Nicholas Church for prayer and political talk. The 'Monday prayer meetings,' said to be the largest regular meetings in Germany, attracted hundreds and then thousands of people. Average citizens began to take notice. So did the *Stasi*, the secret police. Dozens of citizens were jailed for weeks for their prayer attendance. As the movement gained momentum, police warned to 'call off' the prayer meetings or face the consequences. During the first months of 1989, the East German authorities, especially the *Stasi*, imposed more and more pressure to stop the 'Peace Prayers' in Leipzig. They controlled access roads and arrested random 'suspects' inside and outside the Church. However, they were unsuccessful; the Monday prayers continued with an increasing number of attendees. Come what may, the people attended the prayer meetings every Monday without fail.

Leipzig later played a significant role in instigating the fall of communism in Eastern Europe through the events which took place in and around St. Nicholas Church and the Christians who prayed through the fall of one of the world's greatest modern-day barriers, the Berlin Wall that stood for nearly three decades as a stiff and stubborn symbol of human hatred and hostility.

## Monday the 9 October, 1989: The Path to Unity

The ‘Path to German Unity’ was not without price. Death threats, imprisonments, and beatings all came in one package. While all East Germany held its breath, the praying people took to the protest, expecting guns and bullets to be sprayed at them. The hospitals were stacked in advance with extra blood and beds for emergency purposes in case the police started shooting. The world had just seen a similar protest on June 4, 1989 by the students at the Tiananmen Square in China, where the Communist Regime’s Red Army and their tankers crushed untold number of students, killing and seriously injuring thousands. The East German politicians lauded the Chinese Red Army for the massacre. Similarly, such a massacre seemed impregnated now over the Monday Prayer Warriors in Leipzig. But the dauntless praying warriors wavered at no weapon and went prepared for the worst.

A special force of police and the army filled up the city. A suppression of the demonstration by force seemed inevitable. By the evening, St. Nicholas Church was packed full, while other Churches in Leipzig, kept open to accommodate people, were also packed, with many standing outside all these Churches. After the prayer meeting, the crowd of nearly 80,000 to 100,000 marched silently to the century old train station, with candles and banners which read, “We are the People.” Each second inched with fear and tension of a volley of bullets by the riot police standing stiff in green helmets. But as the crowd moved on, the police who barricaded the area, gave way without an attack. Christian Fuehrer, pastor of the St. Nicholas Church, said, “They didn’t attack as they had nothing to attack for.” In the end, the police did nothing, but set the stage for a peaceful revolution that swept across East Germany...and helped pave the way for the collapse of the Berlin Wall more than a month later. [<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/we-are-the-people-a-peaceful-revolution-in-leipzig-a-654137.html>]

East Germany had never seen such a protest. It was the largest in its history. The demonstrations in Leipzig doubled in size



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every week, attracting protesters from all over East Germany. By Oct. 23, 1989, a little less than two weeks before the Berlin Wall came down, more than 300,000 people filled Leipzig’s city center. Leipzig was nicknamed ‘Heldenstadt,’ or ‘hero city.’ [<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/we-are-the-people-a-peaceful-revolution-in-leipzig-a-54137.html>] The Berlin Wall fell on November 9, 1989 with little of its physical structure remaining today.

The physical Wall itself was primarily destroyed in 1990. The fall of the Berlin Wall paved the way for German reunification, which was formally concluded on October 3, 1990...the two parts of Germany were reunified as the Federal Republic of Germany, and Berlin again became the official German capital.

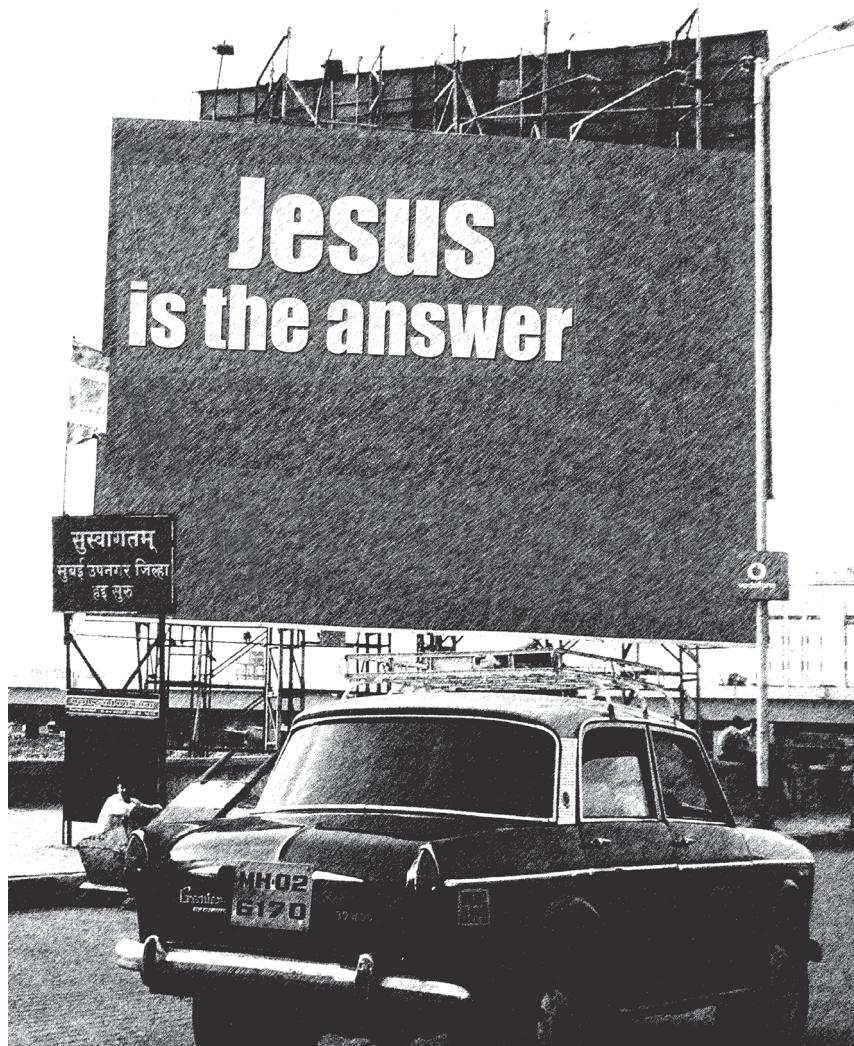
### A War Won without a Fight

The slogan, ‘No Violence!’ [*Keine Gewalt!*] was used by more than 300,000 people during the following demonstrations. The whole East German revolution remained peaceful. Andrew Curry reports Fuehrer said, “It was a self-liberation. We did it without the dollar or the DAX, without the US or Soviet armies. It was the people here who did it.”



**We did it without the dollar or the DAX, without the US or Soviet armies. It was the people here who did it.”**

**Pastor Christian Fuehrer** was the protestant pastor of Nikolaikirche [Nikolai Church] in Leipzig. Christian Fuehrer is the recipient of the Goldene Henne, *Held der Wende* [Hero of the Change] in 2004 and The Peace Prize of Augsburg, together with Mikhail Gorbachev in 2005.



# If Jesus is the Answer What is the Question?

B y   S u n n y   J o s e p h

Science has now provided answers to almost every question man can ask.

There are only a few questions left, and they are the esoteric ones.

Where do we come from? What are we doing here?

What is the meaning of life and the universe?

~Dan Brown

*Angels and Demons*



Source: http://www.pagan-heart.co.uk

"Answers are good only until..." until they answer the deep seated questions of the human heart.

God and religiosity are common to humans; Indians are no exception. Religiosity to Indians is a natural instinct. There is no official form in India where one can mention 'atheist' in the column for 'religion' and not be questioned. It is mandatory to fill the column with some religion in India. In 1860, during the time the British ruled India, they codified Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code, which punishes as hate speech insults or attempts to insult the religion or the religious beliefs of any citizen, including superstitious beliefs. Thus, to be an atheist was not an easy practice in India. No wonder India has not produced very many atheists except for a handful. Even those few had their woes when standing up for their beliefs.

Growing up in India and born into an orthodox Christian home, I did not struggle with atheism, but I did have my woes in struggling for truth, though not truth in particular, but religion in general. Truth is for a seeker while religion is for someone longing for connectivity with something larger and higher than himself or, in other words, a higher power. Dissatisfied with my own Christian faith, which seemed mundane in its practice, I searched through various religions. However, reading through different religious scriptures and seriously observing their vague practices did not appeal to my deep longing for

The Indian concept of god is that he is 'One,' but he can be reached through any faith, not necessarily only one. This is the concept behind the fact that India has 330 million gods and goddesses; hence, Hinduism lacks orthopraxy, a term derived from the Greek, meaning 'correct action/activity' or an emphasis on conduct, both ethical and liturgical, as opposed to faith or grace, etc.

religion in my growing teen years. I searched madly if any of these religions would come to my aide, but none proved true, including the Christian faith, which seemed to satisfy only my senses. As days grew weary in search of connecting to a religion, it turned to longing for deeper thirst. My maturing years now longed more for the truth about life than a mere search for religion. It is said that when man goes in search of God, he only finds religion. I, for one, found many religions, but none satisfied me, making my search more desperate and my condition miserable.

The questions about life began to grow larger and larger as my quest for truth dragged on.

Seeking ancient wisdom of the sages and philosophers seemed a safe way to see what the many philosophers had to say. Christianity seemed more a home religion that I had just been born into. It looked like there were only do's and don'ts but no real answers to questions relating to man's quest for truth. And so, I put Christianity and the Bible on the shelf. Reading through Hindu scriptures seemed the right thing, as most of the culture I grew up in was based on it.

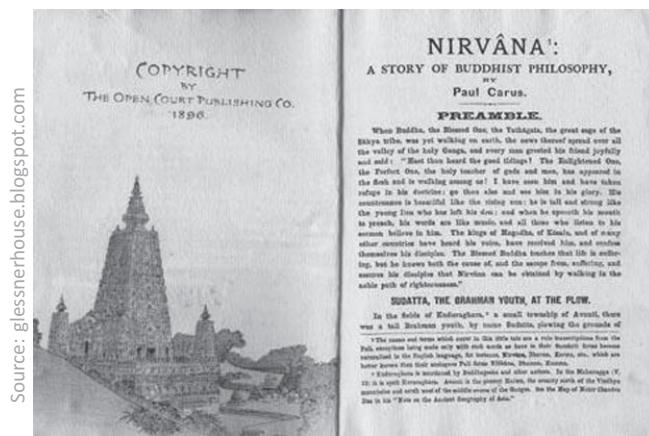
The *Rig Veda*, the ancient Hindu texts, considered the oldest in the world says,

*Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti* - Rig Veda, 1-164-146

Meaning: Truth is One, sages call it by different names.

The Indian concept of god is that he is 'One,' but he can be reached through any





Source: glessnerhouse.blogspot.com

faith, not necessarily only one. This is the concept behind the fact that India has 330 million gods and goddesses; hence, Hinduism lacks orthopraxy, a term derived from the Greek, meaning ‘correct action/activity’ or an emphasis on conduct, both ethical and liturgical, as opposed to faith or grace, etc. This contrasts with orthodoxy, which emphasises correct belief.

Hinduism believes in rebirth, which is the desire to escape the cycle of life and death. This nullifies the need to know ‘where man comes from and where he must return to.’ It is a journey in endless circles, with no value or meaning for human dignity, value, or purpose. Further, Hinduism also believes that humans are born as other creatures in the subsequent births, be it a butterfly, a bug, or a dog. So, the question lingers, which birth of a human being is valid or invalid. Given the understanding that you could be a bug in the next birth or that you may have been one in previous births, life is a struggle until death, with no meaning, value, or purpose. In short, ‘survival of the fittest,’ a concept on which Darwin gloried and staked his philosophy, is the philosophy underlying the Hindu faith. My question for truth caused more confusion as I read through more Hindu texts.

I moved on to Buddhism. In essence, Buddhism is Hinduism *sans* caste system

Buddhism also is a contradiction in itself because the basic philosophy in Buddhism is to have no desire except Nirvana, meaning ‘Blown Out’ where the flame is blown out and the person exits. This is all the more confusing, that in Buddhism’s Nirvana, man’s ceasing to exist is the ultimate desire, search and destiny.

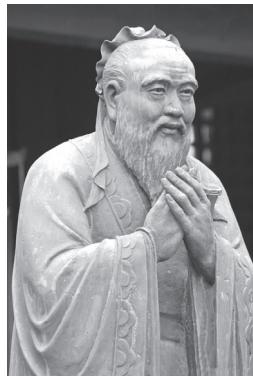
and Brahman. Buddhism also believes in rebirth but with one exception. Rebirths in some of the higher heavens, known as the *Uuddhavâsa* or Pure Abodes, can be attained only by skilled Buddhist practitioners known as *anâgâmis* (non-returners). Rebirths in the *arupa-dhatu* (formless realms) can be attained only by those who can meditate on the *arûpajhânas*, the highest object of meditation. This leaves most humans outside this reaching the ‘pure abodes.’ Buddhism also is a contradiction in itself because the basic philosophy in Buddhism is to have no desire except Nirvana, meaning ‘Blown Out,’ where the flame is blown out and the person exits. This is all the more confusing, that in Buddhism’s Nirvana, man’s ceasing to exist is the ultimate desire, search and destiny.

In *Theravada* Buddhism, there can be no divine salvation or forgiveness for one’s karma, since it is a purely impersonal process, part of the makeup of the universe.

Though my search through these Indian religions did not answer my question, I was glad for the journey I was on, as it helped me eliminate the contending or pseudo solutions to my quest.

While in search of the truth, I indulged in vices that only seemed to satisfy my day’s needs for truth and inner joy, but it left me





Confucius

more guilty and miserable by the end of the day. The pleasures only made me feel emptier than before. More than the search for truth, now the added problem to my condition was my conscience. Not a single day closed without my conscience accusing me of abusing my body and destroying it with whatever I was attempting to satisfy myself with.

I was like a thief running when no one was chasing me. Man's worst enemy is his own conscience. This became my problem. Every human heart or conscience comes with a built-in moral code, irrespective of whether the person believes in religion or not. This built-in software became my daily accuser. I stopped to deal with my guilt with good works in an attempt to bring down my filthy life. The problem and the accusation only grew stronger and deeper. Psychiatry was not my favourite subject, but since it promised some solution to the human problem, I sought my fortune with it. I read some of the leading authors and bumped into R.D. Laing, the famous Scottish psychiatrist. When I read R.D Laing, I thought I had struck gold. His book, *The Politics of Experience*, contains a beautiful argument for the human problem and brings to the surface psychiatry as the 'science of all sciences.'

The God of the Bible seemed to fill the gap left by the great Chinese philosopher, Confucius. Without mentioning who the God was, he said, "...heaven means to be one with God."

I felt I found my answer to the question when I came to the following passage:

"As adults we have forgotten most of our childhood, not only its contents but its flavour; as men of the world, we hardly know of the existence of the inner world...that an intensive discipline of unlearning is necessary for everyone before one can begin to experience the world afresh, with innocence, truth and love." [*The Politics of Experience*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1967]

I took Laing's text religiously and began working on unlearning my past and my inner guilt. The harder I tried, the tougher it grew to forget my past and my guilty conscience. It grew increasingly difficult to erase my past and feel freed from my filthy life. Laing's counsel to undergo an intensive discipline in unlearning our knowledge is far from possible because how can anyone unlearn or erase our past experience of what we have done to others or what others have done to us? Can we forget the terrible incident of having lost someone very dear in a ghastly accident right in front of our eyes? In fact, some of the past experiences of early life are the ones that stick with us most hauntingly until the end of our life. Laing's hypothesis of 'unlearning our past' was not a practical





Blasié Pascal

solution, and I had to abandon Laing disappointingly.

However, now that I was hooked on psychiatry, I thought it must hold a solution around the corner, even though Laing disappointed me. I thought there must be a way out, and so I took to studying psychiatry seriously. The modern word ‘psychiatry’ comes from two Greek words, *psyche* and *iatreia*, giving us the Greek word *psycheiatreia*. *Psyche* means the person and is variously translated as ‘breath,’ ‘soul,’ or ‘mind.’ *Iatreia* means ‘treatment’ or ‘healing’ or ‘restoring.’ But if the treatment was only in medical terms, it held no good for my human condition, as my problem was not physical but, rather, internal, concerning my soul. I learned psychiatry as a science of healing or restoring the human soul. This made me feel good.

However, I wanted to dig deeper. In my journey of the search for truth, I ran into a man who told me, “go back to your Bible and just see if there be an answer...”

Reluctantly, I turned to the Bible to give it a try as I had nothing to lose. I only read the Bible in my childhood as a habit but not as a serious seeker. Now that I was on a reading spree, I got back to the Bible. I liked the idea that there is a Supreme Being somewhere up there. The God of the Bible

...given the time for humans on the earth, we have not the luxury to gamble much with time and truth while there is enough evidence to seek and find that truth.

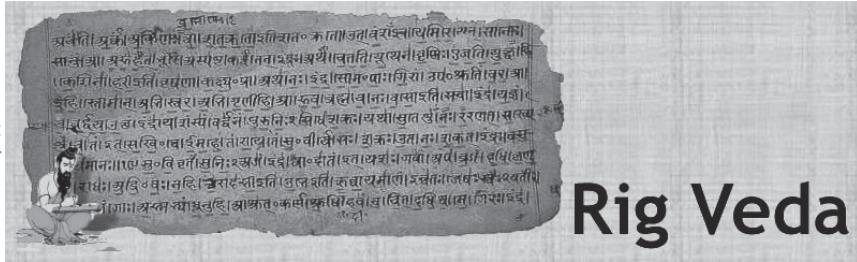
The wise understand the stakes, as did Blasié Pascal; “Belief is a wise wager. Granted that faith cannot be proved, what harm will come to you if you gamble on its truth and it proves false?”

seemed to fill the gap left by the great Chinese philosopher, Confucius. Without mentioning who the God was, he said, “...heaven means to be one with God.”

What hit my desperate soul was when I read, “... You [God] will completely wipe out the evil things we’ve done. You will throw all of our sins into the bottom of the sea” Micah 7:19 [NIRV]. For the first time since I embarked on my quest, these words gave me hope. As I read further, I began to feel more hope, as it is said that my wrongs were not only being thrown in the sea, but my lost years would be restored: “And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten...” [Joel 2:25]. This gave me a breather; it meant life to me. I began to breathe freely and felt like a butterfly emerging out from an ugly caterpillar.

I became what Thomas of Aquinas said; “...To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible.” Soon, I realised that given the time for humans on the earth, we have not the luxury to gamble much with time and truth while there is enough evidence to seek and find that truth. The wise understand the stakes, as did Blasié Pascal; “Belief is a wise wager. Granted that faith cannot be proved, what harm will come to you if you gamble on its truth and it proves false?”



Source: <http://sanskrit.asia>

## Rig Veda

While the question of whether God exists or not is vital to human existence, let us consider life without God. Life would be like a journey without a destiny, without any idea where we started or where we are heading, let alone the struggles and the paraphernalia life brings to itself. Without the idea of a Supreme Higher Power, we humans would be wandering like animals and beasts with no moral and ethical standards. Everything would be relative, just as in the animal world. When there is no hope of a destiny, the value and meaning of life and human dignity are lost and nullified. We all would be robots, walking this wild world. Atheism only dims the idea for truth and reality in life and, therefore, gropes in darkness, searching foolishly. No wonder the Bible calls such people fools: The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God* [Psalms 14:1].

On the other hand, when we bring in God and His purpose of life which is the highest in the story of creation, life suddenly throws a myriad colours of the spectrum. Life becomes purposeful with hope and meaning. We are not beasts to live illogically, but humans with reason to think rationally and choose life and its meaning. This gives significance to our day-to-day purpose with one larger-than-life hope for

A picture is worth a thousand words.  
While every religion talks about a Supreme Being out there and the human need for God, it was God of the Bible who became flesh and came to live among men. This is the picture of the 'Word' God, which is worth a million words that philosophies and religions talk about.

the end of life: to meet the One who is the cause of human existence. Hence, it is both inevitable and compelling to believe that God does exist. But the question remains, 'Who is that God?'

In Hinduism, animal sacrifice was practiced in the Vedic period [1500 BC to 500 BC]. The Sanskrit term *bali*, in its origin, meant "tribute, offering or oblation." The following prophecy in India Vedas specifies the following conditions to be followed while offering an animal sacrifice. 1. It must be a goat without blemish [Rigveda Bruhaduranyaka Upanishth 4.1] 2. The *Balusu* or a bush must be placed around its head [Yajurveda Sathapadha Brahmana III 7.3,1] 3. It must be bound to a sacrificial post. [Rigveda X: 90:7,15 Bruhadarnyakopanishad III 9:28. Yajurveda.] 4. Four nails must be driven into its four legs 'til they bleed [Rigveda 5. The cloth covering the goat must be divided among the four priests [Rigveda Ithareya Brahmanam.] 6. None of its bones must be broken. [Rigveda Ithareya Brahmanam 2:6.] 7. The goat must be given a drink of soma juice. [Yajurveda XXXI.] 8. After it has been slain, it must be restored to its life again [Sathapada brahmana 7.1.2.1-11; Bruhadranyaka Upanishad 3.9.28. 4,5.] 9. Its flesh should be eaten





[Bhagvat Gita 4:31. Rigveda Sathapada-Brahmanam 5:1.1.1-2]<sup>1</sup>

The animal thus sacrificed is for the sin of mankind. Considering the fulfilment of the conditions for such a sacrificial animal, we see them all fulfilled in Jesus of the Bible alone.

As said before, when man embarks on a journey in search of God, he only finds religion. But when God comes in search of man, it becomes the Good News. A picture is worth a thousand words. While every religion talks about a Supreme Being out there and the human need for God, it was God of the Bible who became flesh and came to live among men. This is the picture of the ‘Word’ God, which is worth a million words that philosophies and religions talk about. In Jesus Christ, we see no vague god in words but the God in flesh and blood. Once a great philosopher said that if a man is born like a man, grows up like a man, and dies like a man, he must truly be a man; all humans are born and must die. But if a man is born like a man, grows like a man, and dies and rises again from death like no other human has ever done, he truly must be God. Jesus alone stands qualified to have resurrected from death like no other human being in history. Among the millions and millions of humans that died and were buried, only the grave of Jesus stands

God does not need science to prove Him because God is self-evident, meaning the knowledge of God is naturally implanted in all. On the other hand, science does not contradict God or creation; rather, it only compliments both. And true science does not lead one to religion but lays a pathway to God. The exiled truth is as Dan Brown says; “The Laws of physics are the canvas God laid down on which to paint His masterpiece.”

opened in Israel today as an open spectacle for man to see that death could not hold this God in human flesh down under its grave.

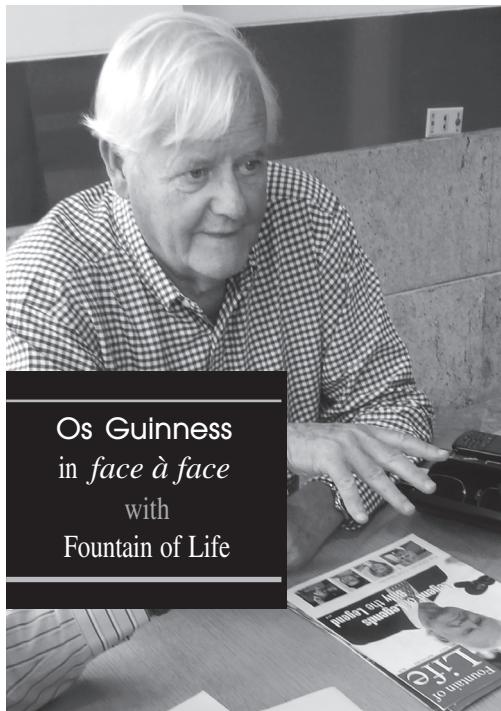
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While the truth remains that Jesus is the answer, the human questions, “Who am I, where do I come from, and where do I go,” must be considered with what truly satisfies not just our logical minds, but also our spirits. It is true that seeds sown in a barren soil obviously yield no fruit; we must sincerely question ourselves if our deep-seated questions are true in the first place and if we are seeking the answers to sincerely satisfy our spirits’ longing. Once we set the questions which we all have whether we verbalise them or not, we must apply the answer that Jesus is truly the answer.

1. V.J Patnaik, *Witness of the Vedas*, 2007, Hyderabad, India.



face à face



"...calling is one of the most profound doctrines...that God calls us and every part of our life becomes in answering that call...to live before that One audience... What matter is that you want to hear, 'Well done' from that One audience."

- Os Guinness

## "Calling Means Everything to Me"

OS Guinness is the great-great-great-grandson of Arthur Guinness, the Irish brewer and founder of the Guinness brewery business, and family producer of draught beer, which is still the best selling product in Ireland. Arthur Guinness' name appears on the Irish postal stamp along with names like Shakespeare, Einstein, Robert Boyle, John Wesley, Oscar Wilde, Marconi, Pope John Paul II, George Washington, etc.



Born in China, Os Guinness moved to England for education following the Mao Zedong's communist rule that took over China in 1949. He was a leader at L'Abri and a freelancer with BBC. In 1984 Guinness came to the United States, where he was first a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center and then a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution. He was the lead drafter of the Williamsburg Charter in 1986, signed by 100 nationally prominent leaders including Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, William Rehnquist, and Coretta Scott King, wife of Martin Luther King Jr., in 1988. He was also the primary drafter of "The Global Charter of Conscience," published at the European Union Parliament in Brussels in June 2012. He founded the Trinity Forum in 1991, and served as Senior Fellow until 2004.



**FoL: How did you come to know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?**

**Os G:** I come from a strong Christian family. I was the last of Guinness the brewer. Well, it might surprise a few India Christians, but Guinness the brewer was a strong Christian who came to know the Lord through the preachings of John Wesley, and my part of the family kept the faith ever since. My parents were medical missionaries in China. When Communism came to power in China in 1949, they were arrested; but I was allowed to go back to school in England. I was nine years old then. So all my teenage years, I lived without my parents in England, and they loved me and prayed for me, but I did not have their immediate influence then. I came to the faith when I was 18, partly through the example of a friend in school and partly through my reading. On one hand, I was reading great atheists like Friedrich Nietzsche, Satwa, and on the other hand, great Christian thinkers like Blasie Paschal, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, G.K Chesterton, and C.S. Lewis. After reading through these great people, I was finally convinced that Jesus Christ was who He said He was, and the Christian faith was true. So that was what brought me to Christ.

**FoL: What other faiths did you consider before coming to Christ?**

**Os G:** I grew up in China, which, of course, was a strong Buddhist culture which I knew fairly a lot about. But later, when I was 27, I came to India and studied under the Guru Rishikish in Shivananda ashram. I am a great believer in the principle of contrast, which is the mother of clarity. For me, it was the Christian faith in contrast with atheism, in contrast with Buddhism, in contrast with Hinduism. It was not only true, but it was the adequacy in showing the answers. For example, you take two things, human dignity or the problem of evil, and run them through the different families of faith of the secularist, the humanist, the Jewish and Christian, and the difference is quite extraordinary. I think the eastern answers are inadequate since

there is no high sense of human dignity within humanism, and it is equally true with secularism. I read a lot and almost everything. The longer I have gone on, the more profoundly I am convinced of the wonder and the adequacy of the Christian faith.

**FoL: More or less, India and China share many things in common. But why do you think China is more advanced than India?**

**Os G:** The big difference is the effect of Communism. The structure of Communism was incredibly evil. Imagine the approximate estimate of 75 million people killed under Mao Zedong. But they are running effective Communism, cleaning China of its traditions; and so there is nothing that is holding them back, and there is a huge vacuum. Hence, people are turning to the Christian faith and other religions. However, there is no similar taming of such a sort in India. Hinduism is still very powerful and often very dark. The caste system, superstitious beliefs, and such are very strong in India. It is ironic that

Communism cleaned China of its traditions. When the missionaries left or were thrown out of China in 1951, there were less than a million Christians, and all of them had to go through the persecution and the creation of this vacuum; but India has nothing comparable as such.

**FoL: You are an advocate of freedom. Having been born in China, do you think China will give way to freedom to its people and invite democracy?**

**Os G:** If you go back to the Greeks and the Romans, it was always thought that democracy was suitable to very small city states, like Athens; republics were suitable for medium-size states; and when you got to the empires, it did not work. So there are big questions about what they call 'mass democracy.' China does not have the roots necessary for



For me, it was the Christian faith in contrast with atheism, in contrast with Buddhism, in contrast with Hinduism...the eastern answers are inadequate since there is no high sense of human dignity within humanism, and it is equally true with secularism...The longer I have gone on, the more profoundly I am convinced of the wonder and the adequacy of the Christian faith.





When the American founders got things like 'religious freedom,' they got it right from the beginning. But when they came to race and the place of women, they did not get that right, and that is the abiding curse of America.



democracy. It never had a high view of human dignity, never a high view of individual responsibility, never a high view of liberty. No, China does not have these things. India, on the other hand, is better on these fronts. The irony, and by ironic, I mean, unforeseen consequence of the British rule, is that it gave India a transport system, telecommunication, and parliamentary democracy, which is indeed India's advantage. It must be turned into an advantage.

**FoL: China is on a progressive graph today. Do you think it would grow to be a world leader?**

**Os G:** The Chinese have their own highly particular problem: the gap between the rich and the poor, between the cities and the country, the corruption, lack of ethical values in the communist system, let alone the problems of communism. So, these are huge problems, and what you see is the Communist party trying to keep the lid down. And underneath, the pressures come, on one hand, from capitalism, where they want a certain part of the capitalism to be prosperous too much. Equally true is with technology. They want a certain amount of self-owning of the land,

and too much of it will undermine the power of the government. And so they have an incredible challenge. But if you look historically, the Chinese family has never been imperialistic in the sense that Europe was. So, you don't see the Chinese sailing all over the world and conquering; but in some ways, they are doing more today. Chinese are plundering Africa in the way the Europeans did in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

I was in China for a discussion at a university level of the question, 'which faith will replace Marxism in China in the future?' The Marxist party is in power, but the ideology is hollow and dead, and there is a vacuum. The Chinese say, 'will it be materialism, an authoritarianism, nationalism, Confucianism, or Buddhism?' In the discussion, they also said that in twenty years time, even the Christian faith will be the majority faith in China, which is remarkable. The growth of the Church in China is amazing. You have the fastest growth of the Christian Church in 2,000 years. There are more Christians there than there are Christians in Britain.

**FoL: You are the lead drafter of 'The Williamsburg Charter' and signed it along side the big wigs, like the Presidents of the US. Do you feel the present-day trends in the US challenging the Charter today? If not, do you see any such in the future?**

**Os G:** The Charter was a success in terms of its substance, but a political failure, because America by now had culture warring.

Religious freedom was one of their greatest achievements in the early days; but America today is not only in decline, it has cultural convulsions that are very, very significant. I am not optimistic about the state of America now. It is in deep, deep problems.

**FoL: What were the challenges you encountered being part of 'The Williamsburg Charter'?**

**Os G:** I stood for the religious freedom with 'The Williamsburg Charter,' but for the next six months, I got death threats because, at that stage, the idea that Christians should respect freedom of conscience for atheists or for Moslems was highly unpopular. Now, it wouldn't be, 30 years later. Equally, I wrote a book called *Dining with the Devil*, which is a critic of the mega Church movement. I got angry criticism from the Christians, for it is like touching the Ark of the Old Testament. I believe in speaking the truth, regardless of the consequences; but that is nothing like the cost of being a Christian.

**FoL: You are the most sought after person even now in your greying years. What is the secret?**



"First, study the biblical understanding of generation and the way the faith is expected to go from generation to generation. Second, contrast that with the modern understanding. The liberal Christians serve God in their generation and become trendy. We serve God's purpose and in the generation, which is rather different."



**Os G:** No, I am not the most sought after person. I am upstream. I am against the tide. I am not as popular as people often think I am. One of the secrets of my life is 'understanding my calling.' And I think 'calling' is one of the most profound doctrines you have in the scripture: that God calls us, and every part of our life becomes answering that 'call.' And one of the implications of that is, that if you are called by Jesus to live before that One audience, the audience of One, it does not matter if you are popular or unpopular, if you are successful or unsuccessful, if you make a lot of money through whatever you do or make nothing and are poor. What matters is that you want to hear, 'Well done' from that One audience. So that's a truth close to the secret of my Christian life. But do not mistake me to be highly popular, as I speak very bluntly, criticising a lot in the Church and outside the Church, and I get a lot of hate mail.

**FoL: Can you mention one reason why America is on a declining graph today?**

**Os G:** When the American founders got things like 'religious freedom,' they got it right from the beginning. But when they came to race and the

place of women, they did not get that right, and that is the abiding curse of America. On the other hand, in England, the English problem has been 'class,' and England always got everything into a 'class' problem. America's abiding curse is 'race,' and they never seemed to get very much beyond it.

**FoL: What would 'Os Guinness' have been, had he been born in this generation?**

Os: This generation is a trans-generation, and I hope I would be part of that generation looking at the grand global issues. What is the Christ-like answer to these big questions? My calling means everything to me. The reformers made a distinction between the primary call and secondary call. The primary call has three things: to know Jesus and the Father, to live His way, and to share the faith with others. The secondary call has to do with what each individual does in response to the primary call. There are things—the giftedness each one is gifted with; resources, which is far more than money, like our education, our family, our culture, and our moment in history and certain resources; and the third thing, our spheres of influence: one of the circles that our lives touch, like our friends, neighbours and the wider world. For instance, one of the areas of gifts in my life is the area of ideas and communication. So, at one stage, I thought I'd work for BBC, and I've always been in that world of journalism, think tanks, Christian apologetics, so on and so forth.

**FoL: What advice do you have to the 'now generation' of young people?**

**Os G:** First, study the biblical understanding of generation and the way the faith is expected to go from generation to generation. Second, contrast that with the modern understanding. It took different generations and technology. In the same way, physical human generations are getting shorter and shorter. There used to be roughly 30-32 years between parents and their adult children; Acts 13 says that David served God's purpose in his generation. The liberal Christians serve God in their generation and become trendy. We serve God's purpose and in the generation, which is rather different.



Os G was interviewed by Team FoL, Cyril Godwin, Sanjay Joshua and Swaroop Jedidiah in Hyderabad, India

Politician  
Accused  
Dual Murder  
Criminal  
Religious

# Finding Truth Behind the Prison Walls

Malli was a rebel, a gangster, upcoming politician, faithful devotee to every known deity...an accused in a dual murder..  
a sincere seeker...

**M**alli was born into an orthodox Hindu family. He was the result of many prayers and rituals in Hindu tradition hence named Durga Mallikarjuna Rao. Though his parents were very religious and strict in discipline, Malli grew up as a stubborn child. His father a government medical officer held a respectable position in society. From his childhood, Malli Babu was mischievous. Eventually he turned out to be a spoilt brat, school dropout and a growing gangster. Bad company and habits brought him to the streets. He learnt kick-boxing, karate and Kung fu. It all seemed he was preparing for a street life. Yes, he joined the streets. His life on the streets brought his parents untold misery and public ignominy. Drugs, alcohol and girls kept street life rather exciting. Politics gave him extended reputation and money. Malli's home was an abode for gods and goddesses. All local deities found their place in Malli's home. He was religious and strict in his discipline, yet it had no influence on his personal life. His life on the streets earned him the terms rowdy and gangster. The power he wielded on the streets, the fear he commanded on the rival gangs gave Malli a great feeling. His influence grew beyond his vicinity. He now commanded key areas of the city and bigger rival groups. His enjoyed his growing popularity. His friends and fans followed him and Malli was seldom seen without girls around him. The feeling of a hero gave Malli a identity. He cared less for his family and siblings. It pained his parents to see Malli live such a dangerous life, a life on the edge.

Photo by Lazario Gracy



Malli's parents who were worried about his future sought the religious heads. On their suggestion, that got him married to Meena his childhood love and a relative in the family. Meena was a comely and a homely girl and loved Malli a great deal in spite of his rather unapproved life. Everyone had great confidence in Meena that she would change Malli's life for the better. On the contrary, the opposite occurred. After the honeymoon days of the marriage, Malli was back to the streets always drunk and with girls. It was a daily brawl at home between Malli and Meena. The fights would only end up with Meena being beaten mercilessly, often bleeding. The times when he was sober, the couple were the happiest, but this was only seasonal.

Again on the advice of priests and religious counsellors, Malli's parents suggested him to go for cheek-piercing in a forthcoming festival. It is believed that the ritual would work on the appetite for alcohol and every evil proceeding from the mouth. Body and cheek piercing is a common practice in the east both in the primitive and modern cultures. In the ritual, people pierce their cheeks with an array of objects in varying sizes. Being religious, Malli agreed and went for the cheek piercing. But, after the few ceremonial days, Malli was the same. In fact it is said, that he grew worse. Further, he was suggested to go for a 41 days ceremonial vow called Lord Ayyappa Dheeksha. During the vow, the person wears only black clothes and refrains from wearing foot ware, taking alcohol, tobacco or any dope and seeing or touching dead body. The person must live a strict bachelor's life with no marital fulfilment. He must sleep separately in a room and alone on a new mat and eat simple vegetarian food and offer prayers early morning before sunrise. This vow is

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Malli with his  
cheeks and body  
pierced



Photos by Lazario Gracy



Malli walking the  
23 steps fiery  
coal walk with  
his son and  
daughter. He  
walked 14 times

usually undertaken during the winter season. However cold it may be they must bathe with plain cold water. The *Dheeksha* concludes with a journey of hundreds of miles to the southernmost part of India to a place called Sabarimala which includes walk on bare foot for several miles to visit the deity Ayyapa in a mountain area.

Malli took the *Dheeksha* seriously and performed the vows with much devotion; he meant business. He did such similar *Dheeksha* for almost seven times. Apart these vows, he annually visited for several years every shrine in the State travelling several hundred miles. He walked the longest 23 steps walk on fiery coal 14 times including carrying his son and daughter. The pain he endured walking on the red-hot coal was excruciating and the boils would not heal until two weeks. All in an attempt to reach God. But nothing really marked any change in Malli's life except that he was sober during the *Dheeksha*. Even Malli was confused why he was the same and nothing remarkable happened in spite of such rigorous and devotional practice.

Malli's wife Meena too comes from a Hindu family. During her childhood she heard about the God of the Bible as a prayer answering God from her neighbours who were Christians. One time when Malli fell sick due to gastric trouble and developed ulcers in his intestines the pain was intense. He could not sleep even for a straight two hours without pain. This went on for several days. He and Meena offered prayers to every god but nothing happened. One night, while he was still struggling from pain and trying to catch some sleep, he heard his wife weeping and speaking in the dark. She avoided telling him the truth but when demanded she told him that she was praying to the God of the Christians. In spite of the intense pain, Malli gave her a severe beating and broke her

jaw and teeth. After a few nights, when Malli had severe pain and could not sleep, he thought he would die. In the face of death, he grew bitter and started weeping. Amidst tears and terrible pain he remembered his wife's prayer to the God of the Bible and sincerely prayed, "God if you are there and real, please come to my rescue." For the first time in several weeks since his sickness, Malli said, "I slept like a small baby." Waking up the next morning he felt strangely refreshed. For the first time in life he felt that there is a Supreme God who heard him in the direst hour. He went on with life with no more memory of that night. Several other incidents occurred in the subsequent months that clearly marked that some Supernatural Power was working behind him. Some miraculous escapes were marked, as beyond human explanation. He escaped a murder plot by his rivals where Malli was attacked with clubs with nails on it, chains and knives. He was to die in a drunk-driving accident. Doctors told that if he lived, he would be an invalid and would remain a vegetable for the rest of his life. Later, the medical reports proved the earlier reports wrong. Within a few weeks Malli walked back home normally from the hospital. A man who was to have come back dead or as an invalid person, came back home just normally. But then, after his recouping, his life was back to the streets, drinking and girls.

**June 25, 2011.** Malli was drinking with a friend discussing a prospective business when he received a phone call. The call concerned his urgent action. His friend's nephew escaped an attempt to murder and was stabbed several times on his chest. Though fully drunk, Malli rushed to the spot and had the boy undergo an immediate treatment. Later, he finished the legal formalities. Just when he was about to return home, on someone's insistence they all to the hideout where the

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...suddenly there was a big loud thud, a loud human scream and a sudden silence. The silence was followed by another big loud thud, another death cry and then silence.

...two boys were down and were dead lying in a pool of blood.

In a shock the gang fled the place.

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Photo by Lazario Gracy

Prison Chaplain  
Pastor Sanjay Joshua  
baptising Malli now called Silas

culprits who attacked Kashi must be partying. Reluctant Malli joined them.

It was almost past mid-night. The streets were silent. The drunken bikers slowly made it to the deserted hide-out. The adamant boys followed the instinct to a location deep in the neighbouring woods. The bikes made it through a lonely trackless patch in the darkness. When they neared the spot, they could see in a distance the silhouette of guys running in the dark. On reaching the spot the angry bunch lunged at them who were stone drunk; the clash, the shouts and the running all in the thick darkness. There was screaming, cursing and an ugly brawl began when suddenly there was a big loud thud, a loud human scream and a sudden silence. The silence was followed by another big loud thud, another death cry and then silence.

The biking gang realised that two boys were down and were dead lying in a pool of blood. In a shock the gang fled the place.

The next day, 26, June 2011: Almost all the local news headlines carried the news of the murder. A gang of 70 people mobbed and surrounded Malli's house. Later the police came to inquire about Malli. Meena had no answer as he abandoned her seven months ago to stay separately. On 27, June 2011 the newspapers released Maiil;s name as the prime accused. Malli surrendered on 28, June For next 28 eight days Malli was shifted to 6 local police stations jails where he underwent police interrogation which involved sever beating in by various cops with various tools. Almost every part of his body except head and chest was beaten. After one such interrogation Malli was almost in no position to move. His punishment differed each day. One day after a severe beating on the soles, his feet were soaked in water, and later were made to walk on granite granules.

One day after a severe beating, he was sitting in the small dark dingy cell when he met two boys who were arrested on a mistaken identity. The boys tried to evangelise Malli when

he asked the boys to pray for him. They assured Malli that God was with him and if he prayed, God would come to his rescue. The boys were released the same day, but they came back the next day and gave him a copy of The New Testament which his wife kept at home. The boys assured that if he kept the Bible and read it, he would find favour of God and no one will beat him.

The very night he received the Bible he was moved from the small cell to a bigger room with fan and much ventilation. However, when he neglected the Bible he was beaten. Once when he was beaten severely, Malli prayed, "Lord, please save me from this beatings." The next day a new police officer came to the police station and transferred a few of the prisoners to the central jail and Malli was the first one on the list. By now, he was convinced that there is God that He knew Malli in the jail. He flet good about it.

In the central jail, a campus of 150 acres, Malli enjoyed the friendship of other inmates. It was here that Malli met Sanjay Joshua a prison chaplain. Over a series of intimate conversation with Pastor Sanjay Joshua, Malli gave his heart to Jesus Christ and received Him as his personal Saviour. In the prison, Malli met and spent time asking questions. The Bible became his close companion, comfort confidence. Psalm 23 became his most cherished passage, particularly, Psa 23:4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The more he read, the more he was convinced the truth about Jesus and the way of salvation. For the first time in life he began to feel the worth if his life and his family.

In the jail, Malli surrendered his life to Christ and after a few months, when he was released on bail, Malli returned home a completely transformed man. He took baptism and later shared his transformation story with his family. He reconciled with all his family members and today, Malli is a strong witness travelling everywhere sharing his new life in Jesus

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when he was released on bail, Malli returned home a completely transformed man.  
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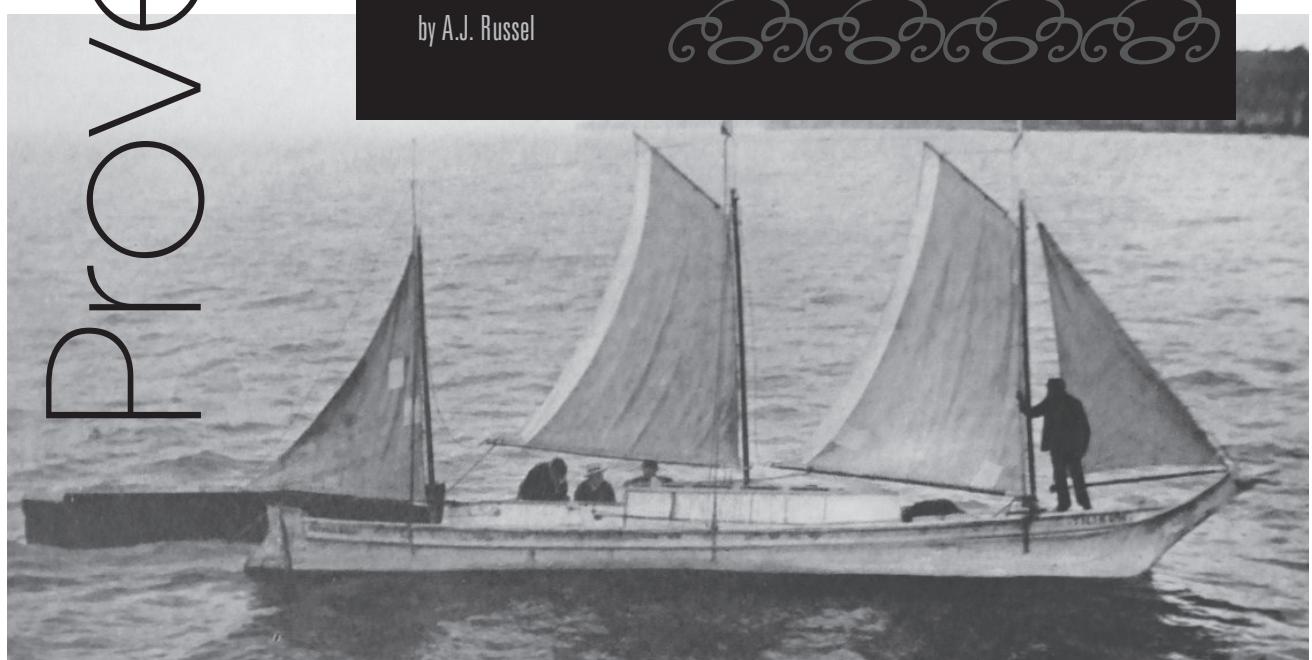
PROVE

WAVE

NOW

You have to prove me to come to me  
walking upon water.  
No sure accustomed earth beneath you.  
But remember.  
He to whom you come is the Son of God.  
He knows your needs. He knows how  
difficult it must be for mortals to learn to  
live more and more a life that is not of  
the senses.  
To whom that when I say, "Come," I  
asked no impossibility.  
Seeing the waves, Peter was afraid.  
Refuse to look at the ways of man and at  
the waves. Know that with your eyes on  
me you can over-ride all storms.  
It is not what happens that matters, but  
'where' your gaze is fixed.

by A.J. Russel



**Family Time**

## Phone-a-friend

You know you've come face to face with your kids' growing up when they start to nag YOU about getting your work done...not the other way around. "Mom, you haven't written a post on your website since June? Why aren't you writing?"

**H**onestly? I am. It's just that these days, I find myself writing most of my thoughts in my head while moving kids from here to there. And just like texting and driving don't mix—(I love that quote: "*Honk if you love Jesus. Text while driving if you want to meet Him today*")—most policemen also frown on laptop-typing behind the wheel.

But what of my moments in a chair that isn't moving? With the price of gas, I know where every McDonalds is on my route for the day. So, if after taking a child from point A to point B, and I don't have to rush another to point C before taking the first to another point D, (mind whirling yet?...) I find the closest spot to sit with pen, paper, laptop, and a Diet Coke. And normally, I try to use those few moments to write all those thoughts that have been spinning through my head with the tires...thoughts about working, parenting, marriage, and being a follower of Christ.

But this summer, I did something different. I read my Bible. No, reading my Bible is not the different part. I've done that since I was able to read. My Bible goes with me most places, and I value it above all my books. But truly, often my reading is almost textbookish: *Who is God? How should I live? What would Jesus do?*

Lately, though, life has been different. I've been through whole new mountains and valleys, many of them completely uncharted.

And often, seemingly, alone. As far as human contact goes.

For one reason or another, the "phone a friend" option wasn't on the table. When it was, I found myself excited: "I'm calling \_\_\_\_\_!"

One day it hit me. Why didn't I feel that way when I read my Bible? After all, I know without a doubt, Christ is the Friend who will "never leave or forsake" me! (Joshua 1:5) And while those around me may try to be compassionate and thoughtful in their listening ear and timely encouragement, why not go to the Source: the Word of Truth, the Hope and Joy of my salvation, my Delight... I realized I wanted to be as excited to pick up my Bible and talk to Jesus as I was to call my best friend.

So, I grabbed the receiver—otherwise, known as my Bible. I found myself in the *Kings* and *Chronicles*. No, that wasn't a misprint—*Kings* and *Chronicles*. And then *Daniel*. And then, in an incredible study of the word, "*strengthen*," something

I found myself desperately needing, I rested in Psalm 119...all 176 verses—as well as many other verses across the Bible that show us His strength when we feel so tired and weak!

To try to explain the richness I found in these books and verses would be like explaining the giggles and secret whispers of two teenage girls on a sleepover. I can say that sometimes it was like drinking from a fire hydrant or eating a giant feast; I

had to take several days to digest it all. Some days, I felt like I'd just found a sweet oasis in the midst of the Sahara. And some days I felt His arms around me as I cried in humility at His grace for me.

And for those who are wondering, Yes, there were times I found myself scratching my head, confused, not quite sure I got the message straight... knowing I needed to call back, rehear the stories, and ask some questions of my own.

Will I get back to writing? Definitely, Yes. There are already articles, messages,

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and columns in the works, especially from the lessons I've learned lately!

But for the past few months, I found that rather than worrying about my words, I needed to worry about His. Just yesterday, I read 2 Thessalonians 2:16, 17:

*"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word."*

That's my prayer as I go forward: that my words—in this column, in my writing, in my daily interactions with husband, kids, neighbors—would be a reflection of His. That they would strengthen, comfort, and remind of His good hope by grace. And that, in the end, as you read my scattered kernels, my not-there-yet admissions, my thoughts on family, parenting, marriage,...you would be drawn to Him as well.

His phone is never busy. And He doesn't drop calls.

Elizabeth Daghfal is a freelance writer and columnist in Kenosha, Wisconsin where she lives with her husband David and five children.



"The willingness to do creates the ability to do."

~Peter McWilliams

"Responsibility is the price of greatness."

~Winston Churchill

"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

~Mother Teresa

"One of the hardest things in life to learn is which bridge to cross and which bridge to burn."

~David Russell

"Real difficulties can be overcome; it is only the imaginary ones that are unconquerable."

~Theodore N. Vail

"Accounts do not lie, accountants do."

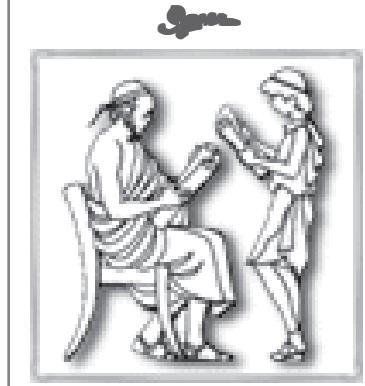
~Nee Zeffs

"We are always getting ready to live but never living."

~Unknown

"If you never fall you won't know how to pick yourself up."

~Unknown



# You Made Our Christmas.

**Operation Blessing comes to the mountains**

**K**adugulu is a small village situated 8km from Chintapally, a remote tribal area in Andhra Pradesh, India. Populated with Kondhs and Gadabas both scheduled as Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) by Indian government this is a village given to strict and staunch animistic beliefs. In the past few years of outreach in Kadugulu, People Focus made little inroads into this village. A handful of families responded to the Gospel where a weekly prayer meeting was being conducted. There are many kids and adults of the non-believing Kondhs and Gadabas that watch us from a distance during the prayer meeting. Animists worship ancestral spirits, hence they fear involving with other faiths. Even to participate in such prayers they fear the spirits could kill them. But on a recent visit the story was reversed.

Last year, when the Samaritan's Purse van came to Kadugulu, there was sudden change. There was excitement and awe on the faces of both kids and adults. Quizzical what the boxes contained, everyone came to the old school hut and gathered around the place where the gift boxes were stacked. After sharing the joy of the Greatest Gift, Jesus Christ who was the reason for the Christmas season, we distributed the gift boxes. Wow, there was a roar of excitement, joy, fun, and tears in the eyes of all the adults. We gave the boxes to every child even to those kids who were not part of the prayer meeting. Their parents expressed their joy by touching our hands. They thought their kids would not receive the gifts since they were not part of the prayer group, but our act reversed their fears and touched their hearts beyond belief.

It was a moving sight to see these parents come to us and thank us endlessly for the gifts. They said that though have had many village festivals for their gods but this excitement and happiness never was experienced. All the villagers especially mother said, "You made our day." Some believing children came to say, "These boxes made our Christmas." Many expressed their willingness to be part of the family (prayer fellowship) who knew Jesus as the Gift beyond any human value and worth.

After the Operation Blessing's gift boxes, the villagers were more open to our presence to share the love of Christ. A year later, we still see children play with the toys they received from the gift boxes almost a year ago. Some of them even sleep with them. To a few more, the toys have become part of their being. Some toys have come to be like alter-siblings for some kids and are always found with them.

**"I thought these gifts are for rich people only." Latchi**

**"This is my first and the biggest gift in all my life." Dharshi**



**"I never knew what a gift really meant and it is soooo big and many things are there in it." Padaal**

Mallavaram is a small hamlet located 3km in distance from Chintapally. The hamlet has approximately 150 families. The people in Mallavaram are from *Gondh* tribe which falls under the PTG [Primitive Tribal Group]. PTG is a tribal group scheduled as more backward and primitive than the scheduled tribes [STs] according to the Indian government. Mallavaram people depend on a natural spring for their regular water which is outside the village in a low lying valley. The water though abundant in supply is never clean. However, the villagers use the water for drinking, cooking and washing. The Mallavaram congregation has nearly 30-40 members in attendance.

In Chintapally, the water spring is located on the mountain top. During monsoon, the rain water flows down the mountain and runs down in small rivulets. In order to save time and energy, people collect the run down water which has all the dirt, mud and other unhygienic material.

Several villages in the deep mountains depend on such natural springS for water. People Focus has been serving in this area since 1998 yet, we could not supply potable water to these little hamlets, though we always felt the dire need for water. The spring water also had been the source of many preventable waterborne diseases in the area.

In the recent past, the Living Waters International surveyed the place and offered to drill 3 bore wells in three remote villages of Chintapally, Mallavaram and vangasari.

Though not an easy operation to get the rigs from the plain area to the mountain top, the LWI did a remarkable operation.

Today, these villages enjoy abundant supply of clean, good and potable water.

## Potable Water Now Flows in Abundance

a People Focus Mission Update



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# אָבְגָדַה שְׂזָה תִּילִיָּמָן

# Hebrew Connection

## ...getting to Judaic Roots



## Praying Thrice a Day... But WHY?



Jews are expected to be Jews 24/7 which means their life must be more outside than in the precincts of a religious center or within the four walls of one's home. Gratitude and thanking God is inseparable to Jews. They pray for almost everything right from the time they wake up in the morning...



*Tikkun olam* is a Hebrew phrase which means 'repairing or healing the world.' *Tikkun olam* is included in the *Aleinu*, which is a Jewish prayer that is traditionally recited three times daily by practicing Jews. *Aleinu* is said to have been written by Joshua after conquering Jericho. *Aleinu* in Hebrew means 'it is our duty,' or *Aleinu leshabe'ach*, [it is] our duty to praise.

Jews are expected to be Jews 24/7, which means their Jewishness must be lived more outside than in the precincts of a religious center or within the four walls of one's home. Gratitude and thanking to God are inseparable to Jews. They pray for almost everything, right from the time they wake up in the morning: in the bathroom, coming out of the bathroom, for putting on *tzitzit* [specially-knotted ritual fringes], for putting on a *talit katan* [an everyday undergarment], for putting on a *tallit gadol* [a prayer shawl], on inspection of the *tzitzit*, before putting on the *tallit*, after wrapping the *tallit* around the body, for putting on *tefillin* [a set of small black leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah], on placement of the arm-*tefillin*, on placement of the head-*tefillin*, on coiling the straps around the middle finger, blessings during a meal, before washing of hands, blessing [*birkat*] over the bread before and after the meal, blessings over food, before eating grain products, before drinking wine, before eating fruit, before eating non-fruit produce, and before eating other foods." To keep up with a constant communion with God, Jews pray three times a day. David and Daniel prayed thrice a day [Psalms 55:17 & Daniel 6:10]. The three prayers are *Shacharit*, *Mincha*, and *Maariv*.

The *Shacharit* prayer takes place in the morning. The Hebrew word *Shacharit* comes from the root word, *Shachar*, which means dawn or morning. The timing is usually when there is enough sun or natural light to recognise an acquaintance at six feet distance. However, *Shacharit* prayers are also offered between the sunrise and midday, too. The prayers contain within it the basic affirmations of Judaism, the *Shema*, the *Amidah* and the ideas of repentance, self-introspection and loyalty to God and Israel. *Shacharit* is said to be started by Abraham in Genesis 22:3, which is traditionally the first *Shacharit*. The sages attribute the origin of these three daily prayer services to the patriarchs; Abraham created the prayer time for *Shacharit*, Isaac for *Mincha*, and Jacob for *Maariv*.

*Mincha* is connected with being 'in the field.' The *Shacharit* and evening *Maariv* prayers may be prayed outside of the time constraints of the mundane everyday tasks. Not so with *Mincha*. It stops the Jews in the middle of their work, shopping, school, and all other usual tasks that life places upon them. But it is an oasis of spiritual time in a tough workday, a moment of contemplation, a calming of nerves and focusing on priorities. As such, it is perhaps the most important and meaningful prayer service of the day.

*Maariv* is the prayer of the night. Also called *arvit* prayer, it takes place at night after sunset. According to Lazer Gurkow, "When evening falls, we sense the mortality of the human condition; we realise that daylight and warmth don't last forever. The morning's optimism and the afternoon's momentum give way to the night's brooding despair. As the day wanes, we wrap up our activities and wearily sit back to reflect. Though the day has been successful, we realise that there is yet so much to achieve. We wanted to complete the task but darkness has encroached."

Why would Jacob have instituted this evening prayer? Gurkow continues, "As the sun set on his first day of travel, the Torah tells, 'he encountered the place' where the Temple was later built. What did he do at that space? He composed the evening service."

# Readings

by the Lamp Side



**During the 1977 energy crises, the Common Wealth of Virginia ordered all non essential buildings closed. Number one on the list? The Church. Non-essential. All you do is open it on a Sunday morning for people to come and sit and be entertained and the rest of the week it sits empty. "Close the Church to save energy," the governor said.**

~Chuck Colson,

*Tikkun olam* in Hebrew means 'repairing or healing the world.'

The Father fixes, His Ben [Ben in Hebrew is son] builds and His family hold everything together. This is the reason Jesus came into this world and proclaimed the same in His Nazareth manifesto when He declared, "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind..." Luke 4:18. The same was prophesied in Isaiah 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*;

God is in the business of restoring the world and His Son came to continue what the Father had already begun. While the Son binds, His Church the family must hold it all together. The world is in its own business of pursuing its goals while the Church must be engaged in the business of restoring the world.

Becoming a Christian is easier compared to being one. As Christians we live in the light while the world lives in the dark. If you know something, you are responsible. Imagine you arrive home late one night and see your neighbour's house on fire. Nobody, not even your neighbour had noticed the fire except you. The problem is, you are your friend's worst enemy. Can you go to sleep peaceful? Will your neighbour deny you when you knock on his door to tell him about the fire? If we know we are responsible and the responsibility must give us the greatest courage to face any hostile person to go tell the truth. This is the urge and the urgency of the Father and the Son for the repairing or healing the world from perishing.

The world is bruised and broken and it calls for us to join it with the Master Healer. If the Master himself is in the business of restoring the world, are we His servants any greater not to be involved where the Father and Son are working on.

A German proverb says, "One does evil enough when one does nothing good." Martin Luther King Jr., says that at the end it is not the words of the enemy we remember but the silence of our friends. Imagine our dear ones in hell whose blood the Bible says, "will cry from hell."

The great Archbishop of Canterbury William Temple said, that the Church of Jesus Christ is the only society that exists for the benefit of its members. We are to take the Church out of the walls of the sanctuaries and to the people.



Becoming a Christian is easier compared to being one. As Christian we live in the light while the world lives in the dark. If you know something, you are responsible.



**A Slice of Infinity**

Dr. Ravi Zacharias



...it is not adultery that makes a relationship wrong; it is the lust from where it all begins...actions do not come just by impulse. They come by a system of values to which our lives are deeply committed. Murderers and masterminds of violence and oppression are rarely emotionally deranged people; they are morally perverted. Their thinking is destructive and their emotions follow.

## Will and Impulse

**A**uthor Daniel Goleman wrote a best-selling book in 1995 called *Emotional Intelligence*. He begins that book with the heart-stirring story of Gary and Mary Jean Chauncey who were in the Amtrak train that went down over a bridge into swirling waters which swallowed up the lives of many. They themselves were trapped in their compartment as they tried desperately to save their eleven year-old wheelchair ridden daughter Andrea. They succeeded in saving her life, and they did so at the cost of their own.

In describing this noble act, Goleman points out that such emotionally charged moments do not give birth to impulse in a vacuum, but rather it is the outworking of a commitment to certain values and truths already made in one's life. I believe Goleman is right in this sense. What is most obvious in the love and commitment of these parents to their young one is that passionate commitments never stand alone; they stand on the foundation of a worldview.

I mention this holding thought of many wars and much heartache around the globe, killings, insurgencies, and other manmade devastations. We shake our heads in disbelief that murderous and cruel individuals can masquerade throughout the world as heroes and saviors. They are not. They are destroyers of lives, addicted to hate and power. The truth is that many have wedded hate to their own selfish wills, and once hate lives in the human heart reason dies.

In fact, this is why Jesus said that it is not murder that is the crime; it is hate, the foundation where it all begins. He said that it is not adultery that makes a relationship wrong; it is the lust from where it all begins. You see, our actions do not come just by impulse. They come by a system of values to which our lives are deeply committed. Murderers and masterminds of violence and oppression are rarely emotionally deranged people; they are morally perverted. Their thinking is destructive and their emotions follow.

There is a simple lesson here. We must learn to think righteously if we are to act righteously. We must think justly and honorably and mercifully if we are to act with goodness and honor and mercy. And for this kind of strength, only God's power is big enough. I hope your life and mine can learn to think God's thoughts. Only then can hate be conquered and life be lived with truth and love.

### D.K. PREACHER'S KIDS

BY DAVID AYERS



"The way to Christmas lies through  
**an ancient gate**  
...a little gate, child-high, child-wide,  
**and there is a password:**  
'Peace on earth good will to men.'  
May you, this Christmas,  
become as  
**a little child again**  
AND ENTER INTO HIS KINGDOM.

~Angelo Patri

It calls for us  
to kneel  
to talk to a child  
The Way to  
Bethlehem's Child is  
**...to Kneel...**  
before **Him**



All Men are Born to Live  
Only One Man in History was  
Born to Die  
**Jesus**  
of Nazareth



*Merry  
Christmas*

