

Kirkspire



Be Joyful

(Luke 2:20)

DECEMBER 2019

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Editor : Mrs. R. Chandy

Word from the Pastor



COMPLETE JOY

Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. (John 16:24)

2019 Christmas!! This means that for at least 2018 years, there has been the talk about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and it has still not happened. The greatest Apocalyptic climax to this world is yet to happen and the Church of Jesus Christ is waiting in anticipation. While there has always been talk that Jesus is coming soon, let us remember this great promise that Jesus Himself gave to His disciples.

"Ask anything in my name that your joy may be full". Another version says, 'so that your joy may be complete'.

If the Lord would want us to ask him 'something' that our joy may be complete, what would you ask??

If there is one thing that you can ask of God *this Christmas and in life* that will make your joy complete, what would you ask Him?? Think carefully, take sufficient time to process in your mind, think as big as you can, think as deep as you can, think as far as you can??

I encourage you read the previous verse also very carefully. John 16:23 says, 'And in that day, you will ask me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name, He will give you'. This need for asking God will be only for this life and not in glory. We can always keep asking for many things that we need and want but it is very important to ask what would be our greatest need or desire from God.

The first Coming of Christ gives the answer to man's greatest need i.e Immanuel (God with us). God with us makes our joy complete. In Matthew 16:26, we read, 'What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul'. All over the world, millions will be spending billions to celebrate Christmas but only God's children can celebrate Christ by enjoying Immanuel, His peace in our hearts, His presence in our lives and His promises for our future.

Have a meaningful, fulfilling, complete Christmas in Christ!

Rev. Isaac Johnson



John's Corner

IT'S CHRISTMAS!

(Read Luke 2:10, 11, John 14:27)

Christmas is coming, what joy it brings!
The very thought like sweet church bells rings;
Why is it that all gladness should die,
As Christmas goes and New Year draws nigh?

Christ came to give joy for me and you,
Profound and lasting all the year through;
Not fleeting thrills of festivity,
But joy deep within when Christ we see.

Open our eyes, Lord, that we behold
Christ at Christmas, and Him steadfast hold;
In all our trials, our joys and pain,
May His peace always in us remain.

John H. Bala Singh



Bethlehem

The starlit night was throbbing with life. The trunk road of Palestine was choked and crammed with lusty traders with silks and candied fruits from Damascus, gold from Arabia and pickled fish from Galilee.

The dusty and weary travelers came on camels, on asses and some on foot. They were journeying for a certain purpose. Their hearts were full of resentment. Augustus the Roman ruler had decreed that everyone should be counted and registered in the places from where their tribe originated. The Jews prayed that a Messiah would rise "from the loins of David" and rescue the nation from the domination of Rome.

Little did the jostling crowd imagine that the heavy-laden Mary would soon deliver the Messiah – the Regainer of Paradise. Greater than the mystery of motherhood, was the sacred mystery of the splendor that would be this blessed woman's portion.

As Mary and Joseph rode that night into Bethlehem the words of Genesis 1 are brought to mind, "Once again in the history of the world the Spirit is brooding on the face of the waters, and as it wings go past the darkness they promise new hope for the human soul."

Door after door closed on the humble couple and they had to settle for a lowly place. It was during that momentous night that God entered the human race in the person of a helpless Babe. It was not only Christ who was born here – the world itself was born anew here.

It was during the time when King Herod the Great was the King of Judaea, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews" asked the wise men from the East. The record reads, "Herod the king was troubled." Was his throne threatened? All evil things are troubled and vexed when Christ appears. How true is the line from a hymn, "Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise".

On this first Christmas the radiance of the first Vision of Perfection shone over the world. May this vision of Immanuel dwell in our hearts

always. The birth of Jesus Christ – Messiah transforms all that is ugly, sad, and dying into newness, joy, and life.

Let us have a Bethlehem Christmas this year. We don't have to travel. All we have to do is to turn our hearts into a manger and let Him be born there.

"The hinge of history is on the door of a Bethlehem stable."

Usha George



Lamb of God

As he paced the hard floor a hundreth time,
His mind still baffled, confused.
Joseph, he still could not understand
How could Mary? He wondered, he mused.

'I dare not take her as my wife", he thought
"I'll quietly put her away.
What will people say!" He shook his head
"Oh God! Save my face, I pray"

In the still of the night as he slumbered deep
The clear voice of an angel spoke,
"Mary carries The Son of God Himself"
In the dark, trembling cold he awoke.

As Joseph waited outside the stable door
His heart was heavy and worn.
The Son of God Whom all heaven adores
Why like a lamb amid sheep should be born?

But, Joseph this Babe is The true Living God!
Though no crown nor sceptre adorns.
Like a lamb in a stall, The meek loving Lord
Our Paschal Lamb in a manger is born.

Sarah Benjamin

Bible Quiz No. 106 – December 2019



A Christmas Quiz (King James Version)

Genealogy of the human family line of Jesus – Matthew and Luke.

Give only one reference.

1. Fill in the blank: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of _____"
2. To what man does Matthew trace Jesus' genealogy?
3. To what man does Luke trace Jesus' genealogy?
4. How many generations are in the three groupings Matthew describes?
(a) 17 (b) 10 (c) 14 (d) 20
5. True or False: Deborah, the Old Testament judge, is listed in Jesus' genealogy.
6. Which of the 12 sons of Jacob was part of Jesus' lineage?
(a) Dan (b) Judah (c) Naphtali (d) Rueban
7. What murdered soldier, husband of Bathsheba, is mentioned in Matthew's genealogy?
8. What prominent Old Testament woman is named in Matthew's genealogy?
9. True or False: Noah, or Noe, is mentioned in Luke's genealogy of Jesus.
10. What child of Adam and Eve became part of the line of Jesus?

Kindly send your answers to the church office by 22nd December 2019.

Usha George

Answers to Bible Quiz No. 105 – November 2019

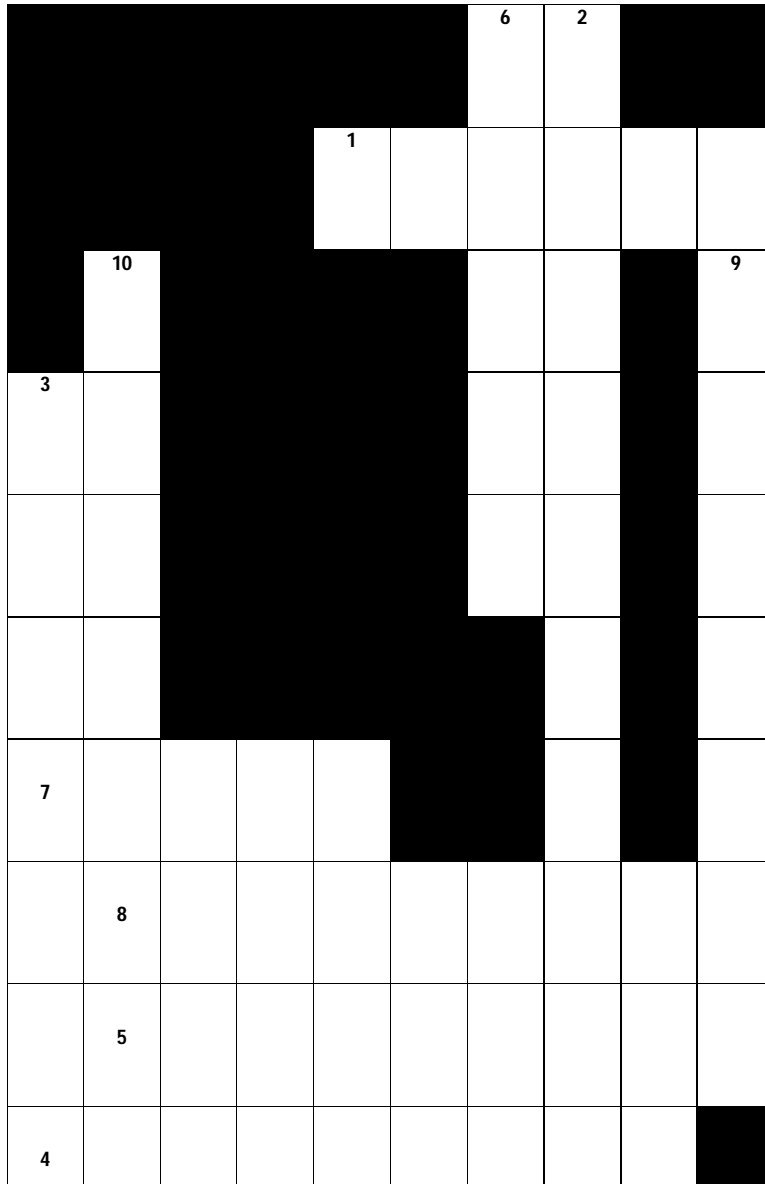
A Jeweller's Quiz (King James Version)

1. Malachi 3:17
2. "A fair woman without discretion." Proverbs 11:22
3. Job. Job 28:18
4. The man who sold his all for a great price. Matthew 13:45,46
5. The New Jerusalem. Revelation 21
6. In David's time. 1 Chronicles 21:25
7. Diamond. Jeremiah 17:1
8. The Prodigal Son. Luke 15:22
9. "Before swine". Matthew 7:6
10. (a) A jewelled smelling box. Isaiah 3:20 and Exodus 35: 22.
(b) A socket in which a precious stone is set. Exodus 28:11, 39:6.

The winners are:

1. Ms Alverna McGrath
2. Dr (Mrs) Sujatha Elizabeth Prasad
3. Mrs Elizabeth Jayaraj
4. Mrs Indira Rajanayakam
5. Mrs Snehalatha Bright
6. Mrs Victoria Basker
7. Mrs Gladys Vedavimali
8. Mrs Aruna Asir

Hearty congratulations!



ACROSS:

1. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head and you will _____ his heel.
4. Bethlehem was situated inside this region.
5. The Word became flesh and made his _____ among us.
7. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about _____ months.
8. After returning from Egypt Joseph and Mary went to a town called _____.

DOWN:

2. Therefore the Lord _____ will give you a sign:
3. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with _____ and righteousness.....
6. He will be _____ and will be called the Son of the Most High.
9. He himself was not the light; he came only as a _____ to the light.
10. Righteousness will be his _____ and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

Please send your answers with Name to the Church office before 20th of every month.

Dr. Praise Joseph Ambrose

OBITUARY

Mrs. Shantha Jeyakumar, our member, passed away on Saturday, 16th November aged 72 years. The funeral was held in The Kirk on 18th November, followed by burial in Kilpauk Cemetery. We convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.



Medical Corner

EMOTIONAL HEALTH PEACE

“Doctors treat but Jesus heals”

Everyone wants peace in their lives. Lack of peace leads to innumerable health problems, like Peptic ulcer, Hypertension, Sleeplessness, Depression, Anxiety, Eating disorders etc.

“A heart at peace gives life to the body” Proverbs 14:30. Seek peace and pursue it. Ps. 34:14. God has called us to live in peace. (1Cor. 7:15), Righteousness is important to have peace. “Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.” Psalm 85:1.

Contentment is essential for peace to abide within oneself and the family. “Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting with strife.” (Proverb 17:1). Trust in God and a steadfast mind gives peace. “You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast because he trusts in you.” (Isaiah 26:3-4). A good and righteous person, who trusts God will find peace. God’s favour also is essential for peace. “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests” (Luke 2:14). Jesus said “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:27).

Apostle Paul instructs Timothy. “Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Tim 2:22). Apostle Peter talks about peace to the believers. “For whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.” (1Pt. 3:10-11).

Now as children of God and citizens of heaven, how should we use our words, for spreading peace at home, workplace and Church?

1. **Kind Words:** "An anxious heart weighs a man down but a kind world cheers him up (Proverbs 12:25).
2. **Pleasant Words:** "Pleasant words are a honey comb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones." (Proverb 16:24).
3. **Apt Words:** "A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in setting of silver. (Proverb 25:11).
4. **Fountain:** "The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life" (Proverb 10:11).
5. **Gentle:** "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh world stirs up anger" Proverb 15:1).
6. **Encouraging:** Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers at Antioch. Acts. 15:32.

"Encourage one another daily, (Heb 3:13).

So, what do we do to get peace? The answer is given in Philippians 4:6-7. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanks giving present your requests to God and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." "Peace is part of the priestly blessing. "The Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace." (Numbers 6:26).

Persons with Suicidal thoughts, severe depression, anxiety neurosis and physical illnesses due to loss of peace must take appropriate medical treatment. Permanent peace can be obtained by reading the word of God and obeying it. "Great peace have they who love your law and nothing can make them stumble. (Psalm 119:165). "Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you." (2 Thes:3:16).

Dr. Rajini Kantha Narendranath

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO!

The first Adam sinned against God. When God questioned him, he said, the woman you put here – gave me the fruit and I ate it. In other words, Adam did not accept his mistake (sin). Rather he put the blame on his 'bride' – Eve. The result is known to us. Both were punished and we are still suffering.

A famous film maker was once interviewed by the media. He was asked how he got such beautiful story lines. He said he always prepared different scenes for the various stages of his film and he started by preparing the very last scene! Sometimes, he said, he even finished the shooting of the last scene and then gradually built the story backwards till he came to the first scene! The result is: There will be lots of twists and turns, ups and downs in the story, but the end would be always as planned – fabulous!

The ultimate plan is always most important. Even when we plan to build a house, we have the final product sketched and etched in our minds. When we start working, it is never a pleasant task. The foundation work, the unending digging and cleaning, concrete work, wood work, painting work, then the final finishing work.....all are dirty and unpleasant jobs. But one has to go through it all because the ultimate goal is that beautiful dream house that is etched in our mind.

God planned everything before creation. Someone asked where Adam was before he came into the world. Between the first and the second Adam, a few days (God's time) had passed. Adam surrendered himself to the opposition party, and generally the world became a 'NO GOD' zone. As it says in Romans 1:29, they have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity.

All of us have emotional wounds. No one is spared pain, failures and challenges. It is only God who can bring justice into our lives. In moments of anger, we may settle scores with our adversaries by paying them in the same coin and feel satisfied. But that is not the plan of God. He wants to settle YOUR score and pay you back double of what you lost (Isaiah 61:7).

In Matthew 6, Jesus teaches us how to pray. In one point he says "...forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors..." When God talks about debts, he is not only talking about monetary debts. He is talking about the times people mistreat us, the times when people take advantage of us, when we were punished for no fault of ours, when

somebody gets promoted to a position that was rightly ours. Generally life is unfair; but God is very fair and just. It is not for us to go after our enemies to take revenge. Deut. 32: 35 says God will take revenge.

All we have to do is forgive our debtors and move on in life. We need not carry a chip on our shoulders and lead a sour life, hating everything, distrusting everybody and leading a loveless life. God is our vindicator and all we have to do is dump all our sorrows and pain on His shoulders and forget about it. It is not an easy task to love our enemies and do good to them that persecute us. But this is what Jesus taught us. Forgiveness is the prerequisite for elevation to the next level. Matthew 5:22 says whoever is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. It further goes on to say that no gifts will be accepted at the altar if you are not at peace with your brother.

The most important and the last scene of the creation story is the salvation scene. Jesus knew that the final debt of humanity was to be paid in full. Just before He was crucified, in Luke 22:69-70, He replies to the chief priests and teachers that the Son of man will henceforth be seated at the right hand of the mighty God. When they asked Him if He was the Son of God, He said, "You say that I am."

The crowd was now ready to crucify Him and see the gruesome sight. Jesus was crucified and He hung between two criminals. He was tired, breathless, in excruciating pain. He still had a piece of work to be completed. Without that, there would have been no salvation. He slowly looked up to Heaven, and said, "Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are doing." With that one crucial statement, He paid the debt of all His tormentors and us.

The first Adam was also punished, but that was for what he had done. The second Adam – Jesus Christ – was also punished, but not for anything He had done. Unlike the first Adam, he volunteered to take upon himself the punishment of all mankind so that we are set free.

Christmas is just a few days away! What is your relationship with this Jesus? Is He your friend, master, a historical figure or a kind of holy man whose picture is hung on the wall? Or, have you accepted that He is the only God who has died on the cross to set you free? Let the Son of God who was born in a manger long time ago come to live in your heart this Christmas.

Forgive all those who have in some way hurt you, accept Him and have a blessed CHRISTMAS.

James Roberts



It's in Your Heart and Mouth - the Revealed Word

(A devotional thought on Deut 30:11-20)

Often while reading the Old Testament we might think it is hard to understand; but no, it is not. The Word itself declares, "...it is not too difficult" (verse 11) For the Bible says in Deut 29:29, "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law." And Jesus says in Matt 13:10, "...the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been *given to you...*"

Let us pause and reflect on what the *revealed* things are:

God has made known to us from His Word, the Bible, all that we need to know from creation and even prior to the creation of this world (Isaiah 14) to the end of the world and beyond—reaching into eternity. The one thread that runs from Genesis to Revelation is God's plan for our salvation. Yes, there are some mysteries that He has not yet revealed to us, like the seven thunders in Revelation 10 and some visions in Daniel 12 where they were asked to 'seal up'. Let us not worry about the "secret things which belong to the Lord..." but let us maximise on the revealed things. Because we have answers to every question under the sun—blueprint for happy marriages, up-bringing of children, guidelines for business and administration, agriculture and architecture, how to handle inter-personal relationships, and the list goes on. But the most important part is spiritual growth: "...to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

The more we study the Bible the more He will reveal. Jesus says that the more spiritual knowledge we gain the more will be given to us (Matt 13:12a) "Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance." However, beware, the second half of the verse (12b)

warns us of what will happen if we do not have. (Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.) The Word is imbedded with hidden treasure that only those who dig and delve will find it.

The best part of this particular treasure hunt is that God has kept His Word “within reach” (verse 11)—He has made His Word, the Bible available to us in the language of our choice; He has given us umpteen opportunities to hear the Word through sermons and various modes of communication including the soft version. And Nature itself ‘speaks’ to us of our Creator’s wondrous doings as recorded in Psalm 19:1-4, “The heavens declare the glory of God...” (Do take time to look into this passage for the verbs used here are amazing—declare, proclaim, pour forth, reveal—all with inaudible *sound!*)

True, “...the Word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.” (verse 14). Therefore, with the Holy Spirit’s help let us gorge on the Word. But before we do that, there is a criterion to be followed: We need to choose to “love the Lord, listen to His voice and hold fast to Him” (verse 20). May the Lord help us to make the right choice, for it is a choice between life and death (verse 14).

Once we make the choice and ensure the Word is in our mouth and heart, the benefits and growth opportunities are immeasurable. An exclusive treasure hunt will be required to put them down together. Nevertheless, let us take a look at a couple of impacts: If the Word is in our heart, the scripture says, “...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matt 12:34). If the Word is in our mouth, our words/speech “will always be with grace...” (Col 4:6). Shall we therefore open our mouths wide and ask the Lord to fill it? Yes, He will fill it according to His promise in Psalm 81:10.

Like the Psalmist, let this be our prayer: “May the words of my *mouth* and the meditation of my *heart* be pleasing in your sight, Oh Lord my Rock and my Redeemer.” (Ps 19:14) Amen.

Lily Venkatarangam



The AKCDC Programme and some reflections thereof

Even as the last applause resonated across the church in appreciation of the splendid performance of the children of the AKCDC, my thoughts went back to the time when I found it a great blessing to be involved in such a ministry.

My 26 years of bank service was prematurely cut off with a life-threatening auto-immune disorder (PAN / SLE) and I was finally in remission after years of treatment.

In the year 2002, just when I thought that I could enjoy my retirement, an elderly friend of mine hauled me off one afternoon to meet a team of Christian educationists who were starting a Community College with short-term courses aimed at empowering girl children with life-skill subjects while exposing them to the Gospel. He wanted me to impart some Spoken & Written English skills to girls who had done Standards 10 or 12.

I had been a Guest Faculty Member at my bank's Staff College but this was a different ball game. On the Opening Day, the Principal requested me to give them a message in Tamil as the Worship was going on. This unexpected 'honour' had me wondering what I was going to do for I had never, ever done it before (in my mother tongue Tamil). I closed my eyes briefly in a sincere prayer to the Lord to give me this grace and what happened after that had everyone, including me, wondering what was going on for I heard myself speaking in chaste Tamil and saw several faces smiling and heads nodding in approval.

Many hard truths were gleaned during the first few days – that many of them hadn't had breakfast and a few couldn't even manage a bath as the Water Tanker had skipped their street. Way back in 2002, five

rupees could get them what they termed "Pattai Soru" which was a dry lime rice or tamarind rice with a pickle which three or four would share. Seeing some of my students trudge down over a kilometre in hot sunshine, I used to pick them up en route in my car. Many would confess that it was indeed a first ride in a car.

Little acts of love and kindness went a long way with them and often tears flowed down their cheeks with gratitude and great joy. I found much delight in imparting that elusive 'Spoken English' with the Lord teaching me how to go about it.

When I look back at the thirteen long years of my association with such Institutions which not only taught them life-skills but also brought them to the saving grace of our Saviour, I can emphatically declare that this indeed was my true calling.

May God bless all those who toil at our own AKCDC, RMDCC, Asha and other outreach programmes to bring a rich harvest to Him.

Jayachander Asirvadam



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PLAY 24th NOVEMBER



AKCDC PROJECT SUNDAY 10th NOVEMBER

