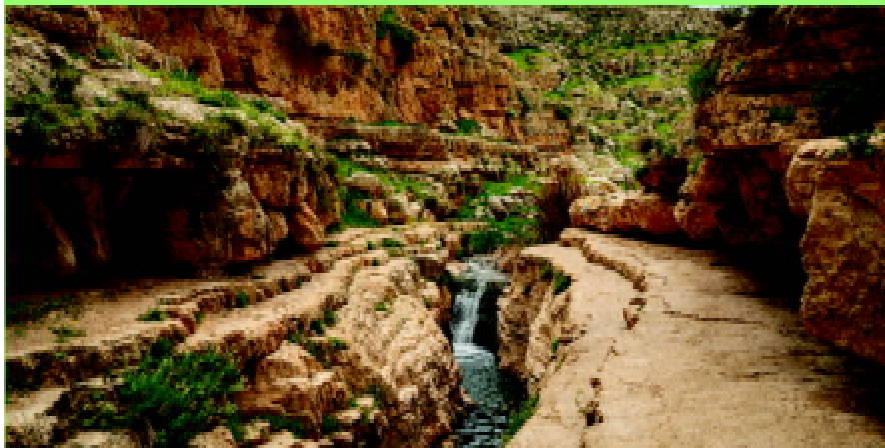


# *Kirkspire*

The Monthly Magazine of St. Andrew's Church (The Kirk), Chennai



Then she called the name of the Lord who  
spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees;  
for she said, "Have I also here seen  
Him who sees me?" Genesis 16:13

*February 2022*

## **CONTENTS**

Word from the Pastor	<i>Rev Isaac Johnson</i>	3
Need	<i>Dr. Susan Rajkumari</i>	5
Who am I that You think of me?	<i>Usha George</i>	8
Report on the AKCDC Project	<i>Sophia Dulipsingh</i>	10
Stranger than Fiction	<i>M. Benjamin</i>	14
Twenty Fingers Make Melody	<i>Late A.N. Rajamani</i>	16
Medical Corner	<i>Rajinikantha Narendranath</i>	18
Answers to Bible Quiz No. 122		19
Bible Quiz No. 123 - February		20
John's Corner	<i>John H. Bala Singh</i>	22

**Editor : Usha George**

**Ministry of the month : AKCDC**



## Word from the Pastor

*I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you. (Psalm 32:8)*

The Bible differentiates between knowing about faith and having faith. It is not important that we know what the Bible says but also whether we apply the truths in our daily living. The Bible teaches us that God is El-Rohi, which means "God who sees us". However, we should go beyond knowing that God can see us. We should also live under his authority. He not only sees us but also will bring to account everything that is under his watchful eyes. The Bible says that even Satan knows that there is God and he trembles (James 2:19) but Satan does not and cannot change his ways.

John 4 narrates the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. Until the day that the woman met Jesus, she lived knowing the laws of Moses but her choices in life did not match the "head knowledge" that she professed. Her excitement is evident when she goes back into the village and shares about Jesus to all the people. Her encounter with Jesus had radically changed her life because now she knew who she was and who was watching her.

Here are six truths about El-Rohi that should make our faith stronger, our lives purer and our hope surer.

1. God saw an empty world yet had a clear vision and plan which is unfolding even today

2. God saw the suffering of the people of Israel yet knew how to rescue them and bless them in the promised land
3. God saw the captivity of Israel and Judah yet knew that they would return back to Israel
4. God saw the fall of man yet knew the plan of salvation, which was accomplished at the Cross of Calvary
5. God sees the rebellion of the world today yet knows that not one of His promises will be delayed or changed
6. God sees into the eternity and His throne is untouchable, unreachable and unfathomable

We don't see what He sees yet He sees into the depth of our hearts and knows that we need Him daily. Walk by faith not by sight, for what is seen by us is temporal and what we don't see is eternal.

Have a blessed month

Rev. Isaac Johnson

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Remember: There never was a good war or a bad peace.  
Benjamin Franklin

Love that doesn't understand the language of sacrifice is not love.  
Anonymous

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## Need

The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need.  
Psalms 23:1

The word 'oromari'  
(origin: supposedly Tamil)  
conjures the perfect description  
of our state of mind  
when we don't understand it ourselves.  
Incredibly complex and  
Infuriating as a difficult calculus problem  
Humans are an enigma.

After all,  
We can be cloistered  
in a room full of people and  
yet feel lonely.  
We can have a whole  
village of relatives  
yet feel unloved.  
We can be the definition  
of success and  
yet feel like a complete failure.  
The dichotomy of who we  
appear to be and  
who we really are stretches  
like the vast Grand canyon.

In our attempts to nullify  
that 'oromari' feeling  
we go down that dead end road

vainly searching for that  
elusive 'something' which is  
supposed to make us deliriously happy.  
I am no exception.  
These things I do:  
badger my poor husband to spend more time with me  
(basis: a fulfilled relationship will make me happy)  
venture into the exciting territory of online shopping  
(basis: new things will fill the void)  
strive hard to win the approval of people  
(basis: accolades will enhance my sense of self worth)  
  
Father, forgive me.  
Vanity has become my pursuit.  
I ignore the Treasure and  
favour the trinkets.  
Yet You have always been there  
waiting and yearning  
for my friendship.  
Oh! how often I have  
willfully ignored You.  
Change this typical Martha  
into a Mary.  
The truth is I am lonely for You, Lord.  
May I not confuse my need for You  
with passing wants  
Lonely and needy  
I stumble into Your arms  
for only You can love me  
the way I long to be loved.  
The next time I'm tempted  
to fill my life with empty things  
Remind me that  
You are all I need and  
Will ever need.

Don't love the world's ways. Don't love the world's goods. Love of the world squeezes out love for the Father. Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from Him. The world and all its wanting, wanting, wanting is on the way out—but whoever does what God

wants is set for eternity. 1 John 2:15-17

And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:39-42

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." Genesis 15:

Dr. Susan Rajkumari

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When things get rough, remember: it's the rubbing that brings out the shine.

Franklin Field

The Lord gets His best soldiers out of the highlands of affliction.  
Charles H. Spurgeon

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## **Who am I that You think of me?**

*"Let the weak say, I am strong" Joel 3:10*

A few years ago my daughter and I had attended a morning service in a church nestled in the midst of mountains in California. The worship team with inspiring songs of praise held high the soaring majesty and power of our Jesus. A line in the lead singer's song touched me with a fresh revelation, "Who am I that You think of me?" It filled me with awe and gratitude that He who controls the entire universe, "upholding all things by the word of His power" (Hebrews 1:2-3) is the One who sustains the beating of my heart, the breathing of my lungs and indeed every atom of my being. Do I fully grasp the enormity of this truth that this Sovereign Almighty Creator cares for me, pouring out His sacrificial love on a wretch like me?

Giants of faith and men of God have felt greatly humbled and have asked the question "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him" (Psalm 8:4). Job has indicated clearly "Behold, I am of small account" (Job 40:4). In the 1700s, William Carey, known as the father of modern missions, considered himself a wretched sinner and a worm before his Holy God. The best of men understood that only on the footing of free grace can one approach the throne of mercy.

We Christians young and old often get complacent and comfortable in just superficially knowing our Lord. Our lives are often based on false values, relying on our puny, meagre and futile capabilities. We claim that He is "our God" and yet we seldom seek His counsel and guidance. We constantly stagger and struggle to bear our burdens ourselves. O God, forgive us! We need to burn away the worthless dross in our life and seek His grace, or else we will be building our



lives on shifting sands. We are merely empty clay jars to be filled with His holiness, mercy and love.

Let us not fall into a sad state of despair and despondency. Jesus has purchased us with His precious blood and in Christ we are a part of Him as the branch is one with the vine. Our Saviour and Redeemer will never put out the faintly burning wick nor break the bruised reeds that we are. His boundless grace will refresh and energize us to carry sunshine and diffuse happiness to all around us, all for His wonderful Name's sake.

The love of Jesus raises us up to climb the roughest mountains and to walk on the stormy seas. In joy, we are carried on His shoulder, in pain we find refuge and rest in His bosom. "Behold, I have carved you on the palm of My hands" (Isaiah 49:16) says our Lord, not just our name, but everything about us – our image, our sin, our weakness, and wants. What should we fear when we have our Shepherd King beside us as we walk through life's perplexing and dark mazes?

I close with an ancient folklore "The Rose and the Clay". When a piece of perfumed clay was asked in what favoured region of the earth it was found, the clay modestly replied, I am nothing but common clay, but I had the good fortune to lie for many years at the foot of a rose bush. The sweet influence and essence of this intimacy had produced this pleasing effect.

We too are ordinary, mundane lumps of clay with no virtue of our own till we live in close communion with our Lord Jesus Christ and soak in the rich aroma of His amazing grace. We will then be cleansed, restored and bask in the fragrance of the beautiful Rose of Sharon.

Usha George

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Of all the varied creatures existing on earth, man is the only one who says, "I am", "I ought", "I can", "I will".

Ernest Fremont Tittle

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## **Report on the AKCDC Project**

**“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it “ Proverbs 22:6**

The Andrews Kirk Child Development Centre, in short known as AKCDC, was established in the year 1998 in partnership with Compassion International thanks to its pioneers, the two enterprising and visionary ladies of our Church, Mrs. Usha George and late Mrs. Ida Singh. From April 2017 onwards, it is fully funded and run by our Church with assistance from our well-wishers and cheerful givers. Located amidst the serene and placid environs of the Kirk Cemetery, the shed in SM Nagar serves as an oasis for these children who live in cramped and stuffy homes.

Our Mission is to uplift the highly vulnerable children and develop them physically, spiritually, cognitively and socio-emotionally, thereby encouraging them to be responsible and independent citizens and followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Biblical principles form the base and Bible teaching, imparting Christian values of integrity, discipline and self-worth are the primary objectives besides skill development.

Well, who are these children and where do they live? These are under-privileged children living in and around the slums of Sathyavani Muthu Nagar, Gandhi Nagar and Indira Gandhi Nagar, situated on the banks of river Coovum, opposite to Chennai Central Railway Station. Their Parents are poor and uneducated with little or no income. Many are single parents.

No matter where and how they live, they need to be shown Christ's love and care and so, children aged between 5 and 9 years are identified, registered and retained until they reach the age of 22 years. The children reach the project by 4:30 pm after their school

hours. After a hot cup of milk or soup, they are divided into their respective classes. The teachers, headed by the Project Manager Mrs. Anna Mary, meticulously prepare the curriculum, and help with their homework and assignments. Towards the end of the day, they have a time of prayer and Bible devotion and then break for relishing hot, nutritious dinner before departing at 8 pm. There is so much eagerness in their hearts to make use of the time and most of them are very regular in attending classes.

College going children are trained in general knowledge, spoken English, world affairs, decision making skills, music and first aid after a time of prayer and Bible devotions. Medical care, vocation training, and participation at outdoors events are part of the project. Our Asst. Pastor, Rev. Paul Anbarasu and our member, Mr. Israel are great sources of help in enriching our ministry to the college going children.

During pandemic days, the staff quickly adapted to online teaching mode. Our Pastor Rev. Isaac Johnson connected us with the Head of ECGroup Educare, Mr. Arun Isaac, who at the right time, was of immense help in coaching Maths and Business Maths for the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> std children. Their career guidance training was attended by senior children and they found it very useful.

Today, when we see the first-generation college graduates, our hearts rejoice with thankful hearts to the Lord, the Creator of all things. This place, which was once deprived of education and childhood, has been transformed and children have found entry to arts, science, engineering and law colleges.

Periodical committee meetings are conducted to review, plan and implement best practices with Mrs Kala Dennis as the Chairperson along with the committee members.

The challenges that we contend with among the children are many – safety, health, finances, dropping out of school, bad company, laziness and child labour. Why don't you, as a child of God, prayerfully consider giving a helping hand?

Sophia Dulipsingh  
Project Secretary







## Stranger than Fiction

In the sixth and final book of J.R.R. Tolkien's epic fantasy *The Lord of the Rings*, the hobbit Samwise Gamgee wakes up to a changed world. After a long, terrible journey and desperate last stand, the central quest of the tale is finally achieved: the evil Ring and its master are utterly destroyed. As he gazes around in him in wonder, Sam finds that a dear friend, long believed dead, is in fact alive and standing before him. Torn between "bewilderment and great joy," Sam gasps, "Is everything sad going to come untrue? What's happened to the world?"

Like Sam, we may have grown accustomed to a 'new normal' where ugliness, pain, and sadness seem more real than beauty and joy. As I mulled over Tolkien's words today, I thought of empty places at dinner tables; of tired doctors and nurses far away; of cancelled plans and weary hearts under the long shadow of uncertainty.

*Is everything sad going to come untrue?*

At present, it is much easier to believe that happy endings are unnatural, contrived, and merely fictional. 'After all, real life is tragic,' whispers my mind. 'The truly heroic person faces that bleak truth, and accepts it as inevitable.' Perhaps, as some philosophers say, the calcified layers of our cynicism will protect us from false hope — and more disappointment.

The task of a Christian, however, is to resist this "cult of the ugly," which claims that "everything beautiful is a deception."<sup>1</sup> As believers in Jesus, our true and proper destiny is beauty in glory.<sup>2</sup> Tolkien explains that this is why good fairy-stories console us — they offer us glimpses of "Joy beyond the walls of the world," where everything sad will indeed come untrue. Fairy tales do not shy away from tragedy or failure, but they do deny these things ultimate victory. For Tolkien, therefore, such tales are not escapist, sentimental lies, but powerful fictive truths that remind us of the deep, primary truth of the gospel:

*evil cannot defeat the Good.*<sup>3</sup> Storybook endings may seem strange, but scripture shows us that truth is stranger than fiction.

Consider the fascinating book of Ezekiel. As a prophet-priest in exile, Ezekiel was familiar with long years of grief and despair. He was entrusted with terrible visions. He saw the glory of the Lord depart from the desecrated temple. He saw the siege and devastation of Jerusalem. His wife, "the delight of his eyes," was also taken from him. Yet unexpected notes of hope weave in and out of his narrative, notes which ultimately swell into a triumphant finale. The concluding visions of Ezekiel describe a glorious restoration of God's kingdom and God's people.

Chapter 47 contains an episode that I find particularly beautiful. As Ezekiel is led around the restored temple, he notices a trickle of water coming from its south side. The water is initially ankle-deep, but it rises dramatically— first to Ezekiel's knees, then his waist, and then, quite suddenly, the prophet finds that "the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in — a river that no one could cross." His guide tells him a little more about this mysterious river:

This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Dead Sea. When it empties into the sea, the salty water there becomes fresh. Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live.

*Where the river flows everything will live* — what a thrilling promise of renewal. For me, these words evoke that indescribable, inexplicable feeling that is hidden in the best myths and stories — only this time, I am not outside the narrative but within it. This time, the tale is true. Someday, the trickle of hope at my feet will engulf me as a wild river of holy joy. There will be life for death, creativity for sterility, and abundance for emptiness. Here in my exile, I am comforted; the promises of the Living Word are more extravagant than any fairytale ending.

*Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14)*

M. Benjamin

## **Vignette From the Past**

### **Twenty Fingers Make Melody**

'Since Jubal stumbled upon the gamut' (as the Scriptures record the fact and Lamb phrases it) harp and organ came to birth - the string first and the percussion next - and the piano's advent was predetermined arriving in due time to bless the world. We heard Handel Manuel and Mrs. Ayyangar in a two-piano Recital at the old British Council Centre some years ago, when the twain became one musically. On 8-4-1980, at the Ball Room of the Connemara Hotel, we had the same kind of enchantment, when we heard Handel Manuel and Daulet Nanava Nanavathy in a similar two-piano Recital sponsored by the Institute of Development Education, Max Mueller Bhavan and the M.M.A. The audience was not the usual highbrow Max-M.M.A. class but commendably more common being a good mixture of all those who had ears to hear and critics nurtured on recorded music. But an audience does not make the music. Twenty fingers made it presenting a most agreeable programme of Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Litz and others for one and half hours. Their hands got into the notes as if they were gloves, with such perfect ease.

The eyes and ears of the listeners were on the stretch to mark the deftnesses that die with the moment, if left unnoticed, but make part of the felicity in piano music. Nanavaty, played with the perfect quietude of the traditional style, but was never left behind and never missed her assonances with the more expert partner, while the older musician's piano glowed red hot sometimes as he chased an arpeggio to its dizzy end or landed with poised hands and uncanny precision on the keys after he had achieved his precipitate hurry to reach some emotional close. Chords clashed with chords and rose up in harmony like 'the many twinkling smile of the sea, as the Greek pictures it, when wave buffets wave. The playing was also saturated with personality, she having all her reputation and he the remarkable self-taught musician of the world. To interpret great music one must feel with the intensity of poets. There was evidence of such feeling



in these artistes. A Beethoven piece, 'Sheep may safely graze', a pastoral lyric, might well have been called a tone poem.

Finally, when Music affirms the reality of Religion, there is hope for the world. The programme began with Rach's 'Jesu Thou Joy of Man's Desiring' and brought a Cathedral to the Ball Room, so integrating life.

(Late) A.N. Rajamani

## **Answers to Bible Quiz No. 122 – January 2022**

### **A Preacher's Quiz**

1. Ecclesiastes
2. The household of the Philippian jailer. Acts 16:33
3. Noah. 2 Peter 2:5
4. The Ethiopian Eunuch. Acts 8:36
5. No – the priest or the synagogue had nothing to do with the occasion
6. The New Jerusalem. Revelation 21:2
7. Paul. 1 Corinthians 1:21
8. The Song of Solomon
9. The King of Nineveh. Jonah 3:6
10. Paul. Romans 10:14

### **The winners are:**

1. Mrs Sabrina Siga
2. Dr (Mrs) Sujatha Elizabeth Prasad
3. Mrs Victoria Basker
4. Mrs Peace Rani Sudhakar
5. Ms P Patricia
6. Mrs Aruna Asir
7. Mrs Indira Rajanayakam
8. Mrs Suguna Joseph

***Hearty Congratulations!***



Medidcal Corner

## EMOTIONAL HEALTH PEACE

**"Doctors treat but Jesus heals"**

**How do we maintain Peace ?**

### **1. FORGIVENESS**

**Forgiveness results in Peace:**

"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you". **Ephesians 4:32**

### **2. CONTENTMENT**

**Contentment is the key to peace:**

"Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into his world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content". **1**

**Timothy 6:6-8**

### **3. BITTERNESS**

**Bitterness destroys peace:**

"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice". **Ephesians 4:31**

For peace in the family, "Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter towards them". **Col 3:19**

### **4. FEAR**

**Fear takes away peace:**

"I sought the Lord, and he heard me, And delivered me from all my fears". **Psalms 34:4**

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind". **2 Timothy 1:7**

"Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you". **Psalm 56:3**

## **5. ADULTERY**

### **Adultery Shatters Peace**

"You shall not commit adultery". **Exodus 20:14**

## **6. WORRY**

### **Stop worrying :**

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?" **Matthew 6:25**

"My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth".  
**Psalm 121:2**

## **7. JUDGING**

### **Judging causes misunderstanding and loss of peace:**

"Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brothers way".  
**Romans 14:13**

## **8. ANGER**

### **Anger destroys Peace:**

"A Soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger".  
**Proverbs 15:1**

"The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to overlook a transgression". **Proverbs 19:11**

"Loss of peace is the root cause of many physical and mental illnesses. Apostle Paul says. "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men". **Romans 12:18**

Dr. (Mrs) Rajinikantha Narendranath



### **Bible Quiz No. 123 – February 2022**

Match them. You'll be given a 'Match Word' identifying a person, place, thing, or idea. From the 'match group' you'll need to identify which goes with the match word with the reference in the Bible.

1. Match Word: Joseph
  - a. He dreamed of a vine with three branches that budded
  - b. He wore his coat of many colours in Pharaoh's palace
  - c. He dreamed his brothers bowed down to him
2. Match Word: Joseph, husband of Mary
  - a. He was not a direct descendent of David
  - b. The seer Simeon told him to flee to Egypt with Jesus
  - c. He wanted to obtain a divorce from Mary
3. Match Word: Jacob
  - a. At Haran he dreamed of a stairway to Heaven
  - b. He worked seven years to marry Rachel
  - c. He was the father of twelve children
4. Match Word: Job
  - a. Satan was not allowed to destroy Job's children
  - b. His wife told him to curse God and die
  - c. God spoke to him in a still, small voice
5. Match Word: Jesse
  - a. His eldest son was anointed king by Samuel
  - b. His son David appeared pale and sickly
  - c. His father was Obed
6. Match Word: Terah

- a. He was the grandfather of Lot
- b. He was the grandfather of Haran
- c. He was the grandfather of Nahor

7. Match Word: Saul

- a. To marry his daughter Michal, David killed 200 Philistines
- b. His daughter Merab was one of David's wives
- c. His son Jonathan plotted to kill David while he was sleeping

8. Match Word: Adam

- a. He was created on the 5<sup>th</sup> day
- b. He was created on the 1<sup>st</sup> day
- c. He was created on the 6<sup>th</sup> day

9. Match Word: Jephthah

- a. He asked God to help him triumph over the Philistines
- b. He made a vow to God that he could not break
- c. He sacrificed the eldest of his four children

10. Match Word: Noah

- a. His grandfather was Methuselah
- b. His father was Laban
- c. From his four sons came the world's people

Kindly send your answers to the church office or email **admin@thekirk.in** by 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

Usha George

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If your faith cannot move mountains, it can at least climb them.

F. O. Pascoe

Treachery built a cross; indifference keeps Jesus on it.

I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just.

Thomas Jefferson

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## John's Corner

### MY VISION

(Read Mat 16:18, 19, 7:21)

"Alas, my child! it's now too late,  
I cannot let you in;  
Too long you've disobeyed God's Word,  
And wandered far in sin.

"No use in loudly crying out,  
'Have mercy, Lord, on me',  
You've not to God's Word hearkened and  
Must pay the penalty."

I shuddered as I thought about  
The words Saint Peter spoke.  
Tears blurred my eyes and it was then,  
In anguish I awoke.

I jumped out of my bed, knelt down,  
'Have mercy, Lord, I've strayed;  
I now repent and come to You,  
Be near me, Lord', I prayed.

John H. Bala Singh

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When we labour to bless others, we are also labouring  
together with God.

Fred R. Chenault

If you don't believe in cooperation, just observe what  
happens when one wheel comes off a wagon.

Protestant Voice

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