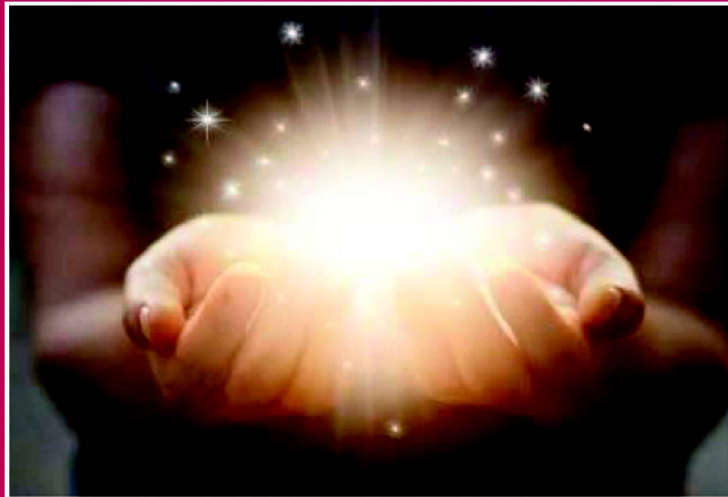


Kirkspire



'It is in giving that we receive'

SEPTEMBER 2018

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Editor : Mrs. R. Chandy

GIVING – GOD’S STYLE



Galatians 4:4-5: But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

I am personally enjoying the study of God’s word during this calendar year as we go through each attribute of God. In the month of September, we are focussing on the attribute of ‘Giving’. All of us are familiar with John 3:16 which says, ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life’. The wonder of this verse puzzles the earnest student of God’s word even now, for no one can say that he has fully understood the extent of the love of God shown to fallen mankind. I would like to focus on three amazing truths that the Bible reminds us of when we think of God’s giving of Himself to us.

1. Originated in God – Jeremiah 29:11 reads, ‘I know the plans I have for you, plans not to harm you but to give you a hope and a future’. It is pivotal to giving for thoughts of giving to precede the need for giving or the circumstances that led to the need arising on earth. Heaven was prepared for earth before the creation of the earth. Our God is a wonder working God.

2. Orchestrated by God – Galatians 4:4 reads ‘...God sent His Son...’. It was not a solution sent from God by word or even through another human channel. God, who is triune, thought of separating the eternally inseparable Godhead so that man who was separated by God would become inseparable from God. Or, in the words of C.S Lewis: ‘The Son of God became the Son of Man so that the sons of men might become the sons of God’.

3. Ordained for God – The giving of the Messiah was not only for the salvation of mankind but for the glory of God to be revealed to all mankind. Sinful man was successful in binding himself under the law

but, thanks be to Jesus Christ, there is a way of victory that comes apart from the law. How sad it is that people even today want to walk long distances to some so-called religious places as an offering to God. All that God wants from us is a broken and a contrite spirit as an offering to God. Let's get this absolutely right: we cannot offer anything to God to get Him to love us. We can only love in recognition that God first loved us, and all our worship and righteousness stems out of our response to His giving.

Give God all the glory in your life
Give God your very heart daily in surrender
Give God your time every day in personal prayer
Give God your plans for Him to lead you
Have a blessed month

Rev. Isaac Johnson

HANDS - A CHANNEL OF BLESSING

"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us..." Psalm 90:17.

What a powerful tool our Mighty Sovereign Creator equipped us with when He designed and endowed us with a pair of hands.

Hands are used in innumerable way. To mention a few - hands that cook, sew, serve, wash dishes and make beds. The carpenter chisels wood, the mason, stones - to make solid or delicate objects of work. The surgeon makes an incision and proceeds with delicate and skilful care into the body to relieve a physical affliction; the painter with artful brush strokes makes a canvas or a ceiling pulsate with life; the musician draws music from his musical instruments to send our souls soaring to sublime heights - the list is endless.

Gold and riches can never buy the warmth, freshness, sweetness and solace of a compassionate hand in a dreary and mundane world.

We have frequently witnessed and experienced the special events in our church when with fervour and eagerness loving hands prepare juices and jams, cakes and bakes, pieces of art and craft. The hands remain unknown but what we do know is that hearts and hands have worked for the glory of God. "A basketful of practical help is worth more than a cartload of futile pity."

When a Russian soldier was captured by Napoleon's men, his hand was branded and the letter "N" was burned into his palm. Instantly the soldier drew his sword and cut off his branded hand and shouted defiantly "I belong body, soul and mind to the Czar of Russia." How about our hand? Does it belong wholly to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ?

Our Master's touch has power, compassion and tenderness - the depths of which can never be fathomed. He set the child in the midst. His hands fed the hungry; He touched and healed the leper, the blind and the sick. He took the hand of the dead child and spoke life-giving words tenderly "Talitha, cumi". We profess to be walking in the footsteps of our Master but are we reluctant to hold the dirtiest hand - both metaphorically and literally?

During the inexpressible majesty of the Supreme Sacrifice at Calvary, the hands that knew no sin were pierced by cruel nails. Though torn, bleeding and disfigured our Lord Jesus Christ's hands were more beautiful than ever.

If the crush and rush of life may use never lose sight of His hands that were never afraid to get involved with the distressed. As God as our Helper, may we ever help to straighten "the crooked timber of humanity". Do we not long to hear our Lord say "Ye did it for Me"? So together with David we pray.

"Establish Thou the work of our hands."

Usha George



John's Corner

Giving

The theme for the month is giving
(Read Acts 20 : 35, 2 Cor 9 : 6-8)

Give and you'll plenteously receive,
But don't give with that expectation;
Give rather with gratitude to God,
Who gave His all for our salvation.

Give to the poor, the meek and lowly,
Who never can repay your goodness,
Remembering all you have has come
From Him who made you in His likeness.

Give and to the Father bring glory,
So others through your selfless giving,
May come to know more of the Saviour,
Whose love is beyond understanding.

John H. Bala singh

Purpose of life – part 13

Open ended questions – Part 2

In our earlier write-up, in Part 12, we dealt with the importance of asking open ended questions like “**Why and What?**” to understand God’s ultimate plan for mankind. It is unraveled progressively in the scriptures but one has to ask many more open ended questions prayerfully and apply reason and logic **and think** deeply to perceive **God’s plan**. God has asked us **not to add or subtract** from His word but has never asked us not to **think, meditate** or **ponder** on the revealed word of God.

*Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; **meditate on it day and night**, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Josh 1:8*

*But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he **meditates day and night**. Ps 1:2*

Earth is small

When we construct a building to accommodate people we plan its size based on the number of people whom we would like to accommodate in it. Similarly when we invite guests for any occasion we plan and prepare adequate quantity of food to meet the requirement.

We saw in our earlier part 12, that heaven is God’s throne and earth is His foot stool and pondered as to why God should separate earth from heaven and keep Adam and Eve on earth and not in heaven. We also reasoned out that earth being so small and finite could not have accommodated the entire human race from Adam and Eve’s time to till now and into future, both in space and resources, unless the preceding generations died and gave room to the subsequent ones.

Generations

***Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever.** Eccl 1:4*

Ever since Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s command and allowed sin to enter death reigned. When we, as humans, encounter such a catastrophe we take immediate action and stop sending further generations to save them from death. But God keeps sending generations after generations, batch after batch as per above passage, knowing very well that they all would die. **Why** should God keep

sending and not stop unless otherwise **He has a plan** behind all these things?

We read the Scripture chronologically and try to understand God's plan from the given narrative. However we must also ponder on some events occurred later but planned earlier by God, to fathom His plan.

Illustration

Once I was in Mettupalayam railway station in south India. Being a terminal station the train had to be shifted to the yard. However, I found the train moving forward and backward many times without clearing the platform. I was surprised by this act and could not perceive the purpose.

However, when I climbed the over bridge I could understand what the driver was trying to do. The yard was short and the driver was shunting to park some of the compartments in each of the short tracks and hence the to and fro movement!

As long as I was looking from the platform (horizontal) I could not understand the reason but once when I went up the bridge and looked down (aerial) then I could understand. Similarly, when we look at the Biblical events chronologically (horizontal), we may not be able to understand God's plan and purpose, but when we see from a bird's eye view (aerial), then we may be able to understand to certain extent God's plan.

For instance if God had planned to keep aside **the Lamb** (Jesus Christ) to be slain **even before the creation of the world** (1 Peter 1:18-20) we cannot simply brush aside such revelation and blame Adam and Eve for the fall **and escape from our responsibilities**. It equals to **looking from above** on the time line. If at all there is one person who would know the future events, it is God. If He keeps the Lamb to be slain even before the creation of the world, we can in no way argue that Adam and Eve should not have sinned. If God had known that they would not sin then He would not have planned for the sacrificial Lamb in the first place and if He had planned then it means that He knew that Adam and Eve would fall and wanted to achieve some greater purpose through the fall.

Thus, God keeping the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden, giving Adam a choice etc., would be in God's eternal plan and let us try to understand His plan for mankind and His expectations.

To continue,

MM Narendranath



FOR WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE..

*(Workshop for families of alcoholics, DCC, Balaramapuram,
3 August 2018)*

On the invitation of RMDCC members, a small group of CCM members visited DCC, Balaramapuram, to attend a workshop conducted for wives and family members of alcoholics. We were pleasantly surprised by the cleanliness and quietness of this place, though tucked in at the back of a bustling highway. We also noticed that all the houses were uniformly built and very neatly kept. At the venue, there were about 40 women sitting on the floor waiting for us. Some of them looked like teenagers and their tiny tots played around them. Most young mothers were frail and had a lost look, typical of their dysfunctional home life. May be the previous night had been noisy, violent or abusive, but it was encouraging to see that they still had not lost their smiles!

The workshop started with opening prayer by Pastor Paul Anbarasu and a word of welcome by Mrs. Gladys, Project Manager. Our resource person was Ms. Samuella, Occupational Therapist, Department of Psychiatry, Rainy Hospital.

Ms. Samuella observed that medical and scriptural teachings agreed on the slow, steady deterioration of the alcoholic in body, mind and spirit. It was a very interactive session and Ms. Samuella put questions to the audience and they responded enthusiastically. For example, when she asked them whether their husbands were "good" or "bad" people, the majority replied that they were basically good people, but that alcohol had poisoned them. We know that any addiction rooted in sin is a poison, and is from the devil. Ms. Samuella challenged the women to resist the evil of alcoholism firmly because the Bible promises that when we resist the devil he will flee. But - she cautioned - the

resistance must be done with plenty of love, patience and wisdom, aiming to encourage their husbands to give up the habit on their own. She told the women that the right approach would be to not try to hide their husbands' behaviour from family members, but that they should enlist their support to help prevent the habit from getting deep rooted in the affected person.

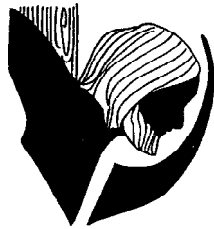
After the interaction, there was a coffee break following which the women were divided into small groups for discussion and to clear doubts. Ms.Samuella, Mrs.Philomena and Mrs.Jessie answered the women's questions.

Ms. Samuella challenged the women to fight the battle with fasting and prayer. She also encouraged them not to lose hope, but to continue fasting and praying for three months. We were encouraged to see that all the women welcomed the suggestion.

The workshop concluded with closing prayer by Evangelist Bro.Azariah. We returned home with a heavy burden for those lovely women, to uphold them in our daily prayers. Our prayer would be that they have a close encounter with our Lord and ask Him to enter their lives to set their houses in order, to remove the mess, ugliness and all that brings shame, and fill their lives with beauty and peace, holiness and health. We also commit to pray for the protection of their little ones from the darts of the enemy.

We look forward to hearing their testimonies after three months....

Susan Abraham



ELIM

Moses leads the jubilant Israelites from the Red Sea onto the Desert of Shur. For three days they find no water, their joyous singing turns to sulky grumbling, and when they do find water they cannot drink it, as it is bitter. Forgetting the wondrous power of their mighty God, the Israelites complain. Responding to the earnest plea of Moses, the Lord shows him a piece of wood which makes the bitter water sweet and God's people learn that He is One who heals and restores. From Marah they come To Elim-a bountiful oasis with 12 springs and 70 palm trees. In Isaiah 43:19 God proclaims:

"See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland."

Our God Almighty knows how much we can take and will not stretch us beyond the breaking point. "A bruised reed He will not break and a smouldering wick He will not snuff out". After testing the Israelites in Marah and teaching them the importance of trusting and obeying Him, God leads them to a place of abundance, where they can rest, rejuvenate and refresh themselves. Our journey of life though difficult and arduous at times also has seasons of refreshing. God allows respite and strengthening intervals which can energise and empower us. It is here that He drenches us with His unfailing Love and deep Compassion. The springs denote an endless supply of life giving water -they were not pools of stagnant water which could dry out. Even now God might be leading you to an Elim, in the midst of your troubling circumstances. Elim need not necessarily be a physical destination ; it could also be a concerned friend, who understands without a word being said, a spouse whose shoulder is always there to lean on, an uplifting book which refreshes and revitalises or it could even be a special time of 'aloneness' with the One who is your Maker, your Saviour, your Friend and your Mentor, when you can bask in His love and listen to His gentle whispers.

Elim was not too far from Marah - just a few hours away and the Israelites could have reached it without all their grumbling despair. If we are grappling with a difficult worrisome situation let's not lose hope -our Elim could be just a few hours away, just around the corner. Let not the worries and anxieties of today sap our strength or pull us down. We have a God "who will never leave us nor forsake us" - a God who can make all things new! He will make a way in the desert and lead you to an oasis with "12 springs and 70 date palms".

However tempting it might be for us to stay on in Elim, we also need to remember that after respite and reprieve, we need to move on. God gives us seasons of refreshing to replenish and revitalise us so that we can journey on and serve Him better, fulfilling His purposes for us. Our relationship with our Lord is never stagnant. We are to grow, evolve and mature becoming stronger and more useful instruments in His Hand. The Israelites had to move from Elim into the desert of Sin.

So do we, confident and secure that He will give us the strength and grace to face whatever may be. There is much to be done before our Saviour returns. The labourers are few, though the harvest is plenty.

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep."

Chitra Bennett



How does air pollution affect our health? Part-2

“Doctors treat but Jesus heals”

The Effects Of Air Pollution On Human Health

Our physical and psychological wellbeing is affected differently by the kind of air pollution we are exposed to. There are many organs and bodily functions that can be harmed, the consequences including:

- Respiratory diseases
- Cardiovascular damage
- Fatigue, headaches and anxiety
- Irritation of the eyes, nose and throat
- Damage to reproductive organs
- Harm to the liver, spleen and blood
- Nervous system damage.

Urban populations are more exposed to the effects of air pollution and, in this context, people who are already ill are particularly vulnerable, as are children and the elderly.

Exposure to high levels of air pollution during pregnancy has been linked to miscarriages as well as premature birth, autism spectrum disorder and asthma in children. Air pollution may damage children’s brain development, and pneumonia, which kills almost 1 million children under the age of 5 every year. Children who breathe in higher levels of pollutants also face a greater risk of short-term respiratory infections and lung damage, such as emphysema, chronic bronchitis, as well as lung cancer. Children who move to areas with lower levels of pollution have improved lung function, growth and performance.

Pollutants can affect cardiovascular health by hardening the arteries and increasing the risk of heart attack and strokes, and there is even emerging evidence that air pollution may be linked to mental health conditions.

How to tackle air pollution

BREATHE LIFE INITIATIVE

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and 54 nations, among other agencies – launched the “Breathe Life initiative”. This is a program that “aims to mobilize cities and individuals to protect our health and our planet from the effects of air pollution” and which has fixed the objective of cutting by half the number of deaths linked to air pollution before 2030. Actions will be local and focused on improving transport, waste management, indoor air quality, energy supply, industry, food and agriculture.

Dr. (Mrs.) Rajini Kantha Narendranath

Bible Quiz No. 92 - September, 2018

A Banker's Quiz

Based on the King James Version.

Give only 1 reference where necessary.



1. What is the most tragic problem of profit and loss in the Bible?
2. Is there any mention in the whole Bible of a 'bank' or a 'banker'.
3. What two well-known men in the New Testament sat at the receipt of customs?
4. Where did Christ get the money to pay His traxes to Caesar?
5. Where are we commanded to lay up our treasure, in order that it may not be corrupted by moth or rust?
6. Did Solomon, Jesus, or Paul say. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God"?
7. What excuse did the money changers give, for trading in the Temple grounds?
8. In what book of the Bible are the words - "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord"?
9. What happened to alienated lands at the year of the Jubilee?
10. Is "neither a borrower nor a lender be" a Bible quotation?

Kindly send your answers to the church office by 23rd September 2018.

Usha George

Answers to Bible Quiz No. 91 (August 2018)

Based on the King James Version.

The answers are :

1. The Garden of Eden & the Garden of Gethsemane.
2. The Cedars of Lebanon, and the Olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane.
3. "I am the Vine" - John 15 : 5
4. Zechariah - Zechariah 3 : 8
5. A mustard seed - Luke 13 : 19
6. He said "I will pull down my barns and build greater"
(Luke 12 : 17, 18)
7. Uncircumcised fruit is the fruit of the first three years of a tree newly planted. It was reputed unclean, and no one was allowed to eat it. In the fourth year it was offered to The Lord, and after that was for common use - Leviticus 19 : 23, 24.
8. 'By his fruit' - Matthew 12 : 33
9. Of Bulrushes - it was laid among the flags - Exodus 2 : 3
10. 'God gave the increase" - 1 Corinthians 3 : 6

The winners are:

**Mrs. Victoria Basker
Mrs. Snehalatha Bright
Mrs. Indira Rajanayakam
Mrs. Peace Rani Sudhakar**

Hearty congratulations!

Usha George

Kirk News



Guest Speakers

- 5th Aug. 6pm** Dr. (Mrs.) Rajini Kantha Narendranath spoke at the Healing service on "Words" from Isaiah 55:10-11, James 3:5-10.
- 12th Aug. 9am** Mr. Finney Premkumar spoke on "Promises for the Journey" from Mark 4:35-41.
- 12th Aug. 6pm** Mrs. Christobel Russelliah (Gilgal Gospel Mission), spoke on "Who is prominent?" from Mark 10:46-52.
- 19th Aug., 7 & 9am** Mr. Rampert Ratnaiya spoke at the Asha Sunday service on "Sustaining Hope during troubled times" from Hebrews 6:9-19.
- 26th August, 7 & 9am** Mr. Rajagopal, spoke on "Knowing and Sharing Christ" from Romans 8:28-32 at the Evangelism Sunday and Annual Retreat services.
- 26th August, 6pm** Bro. Varghese Paul, Campus Crusade, spoke on "My Strength" from Phil. 2:1-11.

Monday Bible Study Rev. Isaac Johnson led the study of Ezekiel. All are welcome!

Friendship Club for elderly brothers and sisters met on Tuesday 7th August. Thank God for His encouragement to the participants!

Evangelism and Missions Movement's Fasting and Prayer met on Thursdays with prayers for the church, evangelists, outreach areas and national issues. Please join us between 10.30am and 1.30pm on Thursdays as we petition the Lord with the day-to-day needs of the church. The Lord is faithful!

Friday Prayer Rev. Isaac continued leading the prayer group with the study of Proverbs.

House Church was held on Fridays in the homes of Miss J. Sugila Sharon on 3rd August, Mr. Godwin Devanesan & Mrs. Florence Devanesan on the 10th, Mr. & Mrs. J. Prem Aruliah on the 17th, Mr. & Mrs. Anand Jeyapaul on the 24th and Mr. & Mrs. Ajit George Abraham on 31st August.

District Meetings District 5 met on the 5th in the home of Dr. Praise Joseph Ambrose & Dr. (Mrs.) Christina Ambrose, District 1 met on the 12th in the DCC hall. Districts 7 & 8 in the home of Mrs. & Mr. Abraham Mani on the 18th and District 9 in the SACCE hall on the 19th August.

We thank the Lord for the members who opened their homes in Christian love and fellowship and for the sharing at the meetings.

Sunday school was held after the 9am services as usual.

Kirk Youth Fellowship met for prayer and fellowship on 5th August. The youth conducted the service at Tirupalaivanam on the 12th. Youth Bible Study on 1 Thessalonians was held on 19th August. A Worship Workshop was held on the 26th for the benefit of young people who wished to use their talents for the glory of God. The speaker was Mr. Nirmal Kumar.

As announced earlier, the Annual Youth Camp will be held at **UESI Highfield Campsite, Kotagiri on 21, 22 & 23 Sep. 2018**. We will be leaving Chennai on 20th September evening and returning on 24th September early morning. If you wish to attend, please block the dates and register soon at the help desk outside the Church. You can also call Suman (98403 26078) or Judith (98845 55573). Registration fee: Rs. 2,000. All youth are welcome.

The Kirk Men's Fellowship The Men's Fellowship Barbecue Dinner was held on Saturday, 25th August in the residence of Mr. Vivek Harinarain with a time of games, quiz, fun & fellowship.

Kirk Women's Fellowship met on 19th August after the 9am service.

Monthly Night Prayer was held on Friday 31st August from 7pm to 10pm. The theme was deliverance from every wicked force (Nahum 1:15).

Other news: Mr. W.A. Bryner and Mr. Melvin Ponraj were ordained Elders in District 2 and District 1, respectively.

Asha Sunday was celebrated on 19th August with special performances by the children. Asha Trust expresses heartfelt thanks

to everyone who participated in the service and gave generously to the ministry!

The annual **THANKSGIVING SUNDAY** will be held on 9th Sep. Every year, we remember the bountiful blessings of the Lord and thank Him at the 7 a.m. And 9 a.m. services by donating offerings in kind. They will be distributed on the same day to various Christian organisations working among the needy. Donations of Rice, Wheat, Dhal, Pulses, Rava, Atta, Sugar, Cooking oil, Milk Powder, Soap etc, are welcome! We need volunteers to help distribute the items after the 9am service on 9th Sep. Contact Mrs. Kala Dennis – Mob: 94440 39720.

The **Annual Church Retreat and Evangelism Sunday** were held on 25th & 26th August as a joint event. The theme of the Retreat was “Challenges faced by missionaries”. Missionaries from Gospel Partners Movement, Christian Foundation for the Blind – India, Indian Missionary Society, Missionary Upholders Trust and India Campus Crusade for Christ shared their experiences in their mission fields, relating the joys and realities of sowing the seed of the gospel, and relying on the Lord to bring in the harvest. The evangelists of the Kirk also participated in the 9am service on Sunday with a skit and song exhorting everyone to “tell the good news of Jesus Christ”.

Trip to the Holy Land For the benefit of members who requested details about upcoming visits to the Holy Land, World on Wings is arranging for a visit to historic sites in Jordan, Israel and Egypt between Sep.17 & 27, 2018. Please contact Mr. Emmanuel Davis (Mobile no 94440 19258).

Congratulations!

Shweta (Oommen) Francis & Joshua Adrian Francis were blessed with a baby girl on 28th July 2018. Praise God for His Mercies! Granddaughter of Mr. & Mrs. Oommen George and Rev. & Mrs. Peter Francis.

Obituary

Mrs. Alice Manuel, wife of Padma Shri Handel Manuel, passed away on Tuesday, 28th August 2018, aged 90 years. The funeral was held on 29th August, followed by burial in the Kirk cemetery at S.M. Nagar. We convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.



Evangelists singing a song asking everyone to share the gospel at the Evangelism Sunday service on 26th August



Independence Day celebrations in the campus of The Kirk

