

**But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us  
wisdom from God—and righteousness and  
sanctification and redemption—  
1 Corinthians 1:30**

# **Kirkspire**

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

September 2022

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**Editor : Usha George**



## Word from the Pastor

### God's Kingdom is not a Fantasy

*Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And Your  
dominion endures throughout all generations.*

*(Psalm 145:13)*

Perfect Holiness, Righteousness and Sinless cannot be understood by us for it is not in us. We have all sinned and do so and there are only variations in the level of sin, the severity of sin and the depravity of sin.

BUT there is a realm, a reality (NOT FANTASY) where God dwells and God reigns. There it is only sinless, spotless and stain-free. Jehovah Tsidkenu means 'God our righteousness'. It occurs twice in the Bible and both times are mentioned in the book of Jeremiah. The literal translation of the word 'Tsidkenu' is straight, stiff. It means there is no room for compromise, no possibility for dilution and no negotiation to lower the standard. The standard is perfection and that immediately means, on our own accord, we are all ruled 'unworthy and disqualified'. But here is the good news.

The King came (Philippians 2:5-8)

The King conquered (Hebrews 2:14)

The King commanded (Matthew 28:19-20)

The King is coming (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

I will let you look up the scriptures mentioned and mediate on them, worship this King – the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. When we come to this wonderful King seeking forgiveness, He trades our sinful nature with Godly nature, gives us the right to be called the children of God and we are sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption.

The sad and shocking truth is that sin in this world is getting darker, standards are getting dirtier and the church is called to 'take a stand'. The King will come very very soon and His Kingdom will be established and He is not asking anyone for permission. His Kingdom will come (it is not merely a prayer to be recited meaninglessly), the King will rule on His throne and ONLY those are washed by the blood will enter into His Kingdom. The reason is because His Kingdom is a Righteous Kingdom. The Ruler of this Kingdom is Jehovah Tsidkenu.

Are we preparing for His Kingdom come, are we carrying this message to those who are lost and are we living this gospel for the world to see that we belong to this King awaiting His Kingdom?

Have a blessed fruitful month

*Rev. Isaac Johnson*



### **John's Corner**

## **LAVISH**

Read Psalm 105:1; Luke 17:17,18; 1 Thessalonians 5: 18  
(11th September is Thanksgiving Sunday)

Forgive me, Lord, should I by chance,  
Forget to say, 'Thank You',  
For all Your blessings showered on me,  
And don't give You Your due.

Innumerable though they be,  
My blessings to recall,  
May I remember, small or great,  
They're from You, one and all.

An attitude of gratitude,  
Give me, dear Lord, I pray,  
My meek response to boundless love,  
Lavished on me each day.

That You're the source of all blessings,  
May others come to know  
From me, as I my blessings share,  
And Your love to them show.

*John H. Bala Singh*



## Did We Overlook This About Job and Martha?

Why suffering? Why am I suffering? Why am I suffering now? Why am I, a child of God, suffering now? Why am I, a child of God, suffering now when I don't deserve to?...

Thoughts along these lines, expressed or not, goes through our mind whenever things in our life seem distorted.

Pain and suffering inevitably brings about thinking centred around the almighty "I." After all, no one can understand "me."

Maybe, Job and Martha could help us when we go through this human condition.

As Christians, we are taught about the sovereignty and the goodness of God. However, when things go awry, we can't seem to wrap our heads around it. There's a disconnect. We tend to react in one of two ways: we either conclude God is unjust and begin to isolate ourselves from God or we suppress this thought with Christian jargon lashing out at near and dear ones instead all the while isolating ourselves from God.

There is another way! A healthy way!

Job thought what he was going through was not fair. What did he do? He came to God as he was and made his case for why this wasn't fair. (Is it okay to do that?) Whether we suppress or express, God knows the thoughts running through our minds. Acknowledging that and coming to God in honesty is the way. Suffering can cause us to be irrational and unreasonable; we bring that to our Abba God, even the unkosher feelings.

Martha had done all that she knew how. Martha and Mary sent a letter to Jesus telling Him how the one whom he loved was sick

expecting Jesus to come at the earliest to heal him. But Jesus didn't come at the right time, according to her. When Jesus did come, she did not mince her words. "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." That honesty again!

God's response to both Job and Martha was not anger but compassion, therefore He revealed Himself personally to them. To Job, He revealed Himself as the Almighty God and to Martha, He revealed Himself as "the resurrection and the life."

For each suffering, we need a personalised revelation of who Jesus is. After honesty, there's revelation. This removes the "I lens" and in its stead places the "God lens." We come to the end of ourselves and begin to see God in and through to our breakthrough.

Jesus knowing well that He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead, cried with them. He is with us through the suffering and will deliver us.

*He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;  
I will be with him in trouble;  
I will deliver him and honour him.*

Psalm 91:15

When under fire who we truly are is expressed. When Jesus was under fire, forgiveness flowed. Is it the same for us? It will be when we are God-conscious rather than being self-conscious like Stephen.

Making us feel isolated from God is the enemy's tactic. Through suffering and pain, let us draw nearer to Christ.

Through this year, as we study the names of God, let us personalise it.

*Angela Bryner*

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Where God is at the center of things, worship inevitably follows. Where there is no spirit of worship, there God has been dethroned and displaced.

*Sinclair B. Ferguson*

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## Keep The Pot Boiling

*"Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord." Romans 12:11*

The pot kept boiling on the stove when an Australian friend spent a few days with us. We had long, interesting conversations as our guest enjoyed her cups of tea. Paul exhorts us to keep our spiritual pot constantly bubbling and warns us not to blow hot and cold.

One may feel that we have experienced a spiritual change after we have listened to a stirring sermon, or during a Revival Meeting, or on having heard a rousing rendition of the Hallelujah Chorus, only to find that the emotion had fizzled out even before we reached home.

A mature Christian is not dominated by subjective impulses and needs.

The Bible offers us marvelous character miniatures, unparalleled in Literature. A perfect gem is the portrait of Dorcas (Tabitha) immortalized in Acts 9:36-42; a woman of faith and good works. She held no official position in the Church at Joppa. She was a mere disciple. Yet when she died, her church was stunned. There was a void that could not be filled. Desperately they sent for the Apostle Peter, at Lydda, not expecting a miracle ...just to be comforted. Dorcas stitched her love and compassion into the countless garments she made for the needy. Her example guides and inspires us into ways of Christ-like service.

In more recent times, lovingly remembered is a dear person, now in the arms of Jesus, who never crossed the seas to see faraway places but crossed her street many a time to share the love of her Master with her neighbours, even to hold a dying cancer patient in her arms.

She comforted the sorrowing and spent her precious time with the lonely and desolate.

'Be a doer and not just a hearer' are the words of James that resound down the passage of time. Of course, works alone do not save us but they prove our faith. Without actions our claims that we belong to Jesus ring hollow.

Living with a purpose and an urgency has been the mark of faithful Christian men and women who through centuries have dared persecution, prison, scourging, shipwreck and the roar of lions. "The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church."

Our Saviour did not intend we sit Sunday after Sunday, comfortable and smug in our pews, happy to drink the milk of the Word. "A church exists for the double purpose of gathering in and sending out." – *Anonymous*

The life of Christ is the most eloquent example of duty on planet Earth. At the tender age of twelve He declares, "I must be about My Father's business." The word "MUST" marks His entire ministry. On the Cross beaten, mocked and scorned, He could say to His Father, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." *John 17:4*

The day of reckoning will soon be here. Let us remind ourselves that we who live in the full blaze of the New Testament have to press on and run the race marked out for us. Should not our lives radiate signals that we belong to the Royal Army?

"Give every flying minute,  
Something to keep in store.  
Work, for the night is coming  
When man works no more."

*Usha George*

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"Christians are like coals of fire – together, they glow; apart, they grow cold."

"In the race of life, it takes discipline to finish strong."

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## THE A TO Z OF LIFE WITH JESUS

**ALMIGHTY** Father gave us His only Son Jesus who **BESTORED** His love for us upon the **CROSS** and **DELIVERED** us from our sins **ETERNALLY**.

With **FAITH** we are blessed by His **GRACE**, He also **HEALS** our disease, He is the **INCARNATE** who gives us the **JOY OF LIFE**.

Who else can He be, He is the **KING OF KINGS** and **LORD OF LORDS**, The **MIGHTY ONE** from the **NOBLEST** of lineage. Who is always **OMNIPOTENT** and gives us **PEACE** in all our Trials.

While being a **QUIET LISTENER** while we pray, He is never too late to **REDEEM** us from the miry clay of life.

He is our **SAVIOUR** who **TENDER** Heartedly loves us with His **UNFAILING LOVE** which gives **VICTORY** over our Sins.

He is our **WONDERFUL COUNSELOR**, if we pay heed to His Voice, He removes the **X-FACTOR** from our lives and assures us that He will always be **YESTERDAY**, Today and Forever the same.

In all His Love, Mercy and Grace we should not forget He is **ZENITH** the Highest Point of Power. Who came down from His Heavens to be the most Gentle Father and Friend we could ever have.

*Shanta Augustus*

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He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else.

Benjamin Franklin

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## The Hold of God (A Testimony)

*When I thought, "My foot slips," your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up. Psalm 94:18*

Life was on fifth gear for our family of six with commitments at work, school, catching up with friends, fellowship meets and weddings.

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, a Sunday morning, there was an unexpected speed breaker. A skid and a crash –that brought our family to a sudden halt.

It was not a car crash but a sudden slip in our toilet which had a huge impact!

My youngest daughter Zianna (2.5yrs old) and I fell flat on the toilet floor as we were getting ready to go to church. My daughter was unharmed safe in my arms, I however got up with severe pain in my hip and groin.

Only on the second day, post the fall, we found that I had an impact fracture in the neck of my left femur. The doctors advised immediate surgery and the family was in a state of shock due to the sudden change of events.

Before the fall, I was making pancakes for the kids, but fast forward two days, I was on a wheelchair getting ready for a 2-hour surgery.

Thanks be to God, I experienced a divine touch of God, the night prior to the surgery. The following day, there was significant improvement in the way I felt. We believe that God touched the bones because we later came to understand that the fracture was not dislocated, as the doctors had perceived from the initial X-ray report.

Our surgeon testified that God had placed the bones in a good position for a regular surgery and that the surgery involved placing

three titanium screws to hold the fractured leg for the rest of my life.

Our Good Shepherd Jesus was reminding us of his sovereignty and hand over the fall, as we recollected how our daughter was safe and that I had not hurt myself in any other manner which would have been disastrous.

Friends, Pastors, families, doctors –who visited or spoke to us over calls encouraged us through prayers and kind words, helping us experience the love of fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. We were refreshed in body and spirit after every thoughtful phone call/house visit.

It has been more than three months and I am now able to walk with minimal support. As a family, we declare with joy and thanksgiving in our hearts that God has been holding us in His arms, even as I was holding onto my daughter during the fall.

God has used this experience to draw us closer to Him – through the loving fellowship of believers, extended time to meditate on His word and to spend quality time with family. This experience has helped us slow down and prioritize the more important and valuable things in life.

I was encouraged by the Bible passage on God's touch upon Jacob's hip and Jacob's subsequent dependence on God (Genesis 32).

I hope that the 3 screws on my leg will remain a constant reminder to lean on and trust in Jesus to carry me through life trials, testing and waiting periods.

We, as a family (my wife Amreetha and our daughters- Sahana, Arpana, Rakshana & Zianna) are holding onto God's hand knowing that He is faithful and sovereign, working all things together for good to those who are called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28).

He is healing my leg and also refreshing our spirits as we believe for complete restoration as it says in Jeremiah 30:17

*"But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, declares the Lord."*

Praise and glory be to our Lord!

*Timothy Deepak*

## **ASHA ... A CENTRE OF HOPE AND TRANSFORMATION**

**"Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise,  
His greatness no-one can fathom,  
I will meditate on your wonderful works and  
Will proclaim your great deeds ."**

'Asha' meaning **Hope** (in Sanskrit) was established in 1982 as St Andrews Church's endeavour to make a difference in the lives of the differently challenged in society. The ministry began as a **Counseling and Placement Centre** for individuals with visual impairment, hearing and speech impediments, motor disabilities, to enable them and empower them to meet the challenges of life. Its focus shifted to children and young adults with 'special needs' and since 1990 functions as a **Centre of Special Education and Vocational Rehabilitation**, subsequently Licensed, Registered and Recognized by **the Government of Tamil Nadu** as a '**Special School**'.

We at Asha serve the needs of children and young adults disadvantaged in their lives because of intellectual disabilities caused by brain damage and developmental disorders, focusing particularly from the lower economic strata of society. At present there are **fifty** Special children and young adults in the **Chennai, Egmore** campus and **ten** in the **village Thirupalaivanam** centre. The training is individualized as per the needs of each child and their level of functioning at that point of time. Each child benefits from training in daily living skills, academic inputs from specially qualified educators, physio, occupational and speech therapies, to provide a holistic approach to the rehabilitation process. Five of our children having progressed well have been initiated into the mainstream school syllabus and are undergoing different class syllabus depending on their individual capacities. In the past, two of our boys cleared the standard eight public examination and qualified to register in the 'Government Employment Exchange'.

Besides academics, the children are provided with ample opportunities to enhance their creativity and social growth by participating in various **interschool cultural meets**. They regularly participate in the Chennai Special Olympics, Tamil Nadu Government **Sports Meet** and other city Cultural Meets every year.

**Therapy Units in Physio, Occupational and Speech Training** are integral to the rehabilitation of these special children, helping them develop their mobility, self-care skills and other abilities, overcome speech constraints and improve their abilities to speak.

**Early Intervention Programme** for the very severely affected little ones is being imparted using a lot of therapeutic interventions to provide them with the best advantage.

**Vocational Training & Production Programmes** are integral to Asha's vision, reflecting the ultimate goal of this ministry, which is to shape his/her personality, attain self-identity and enhance self-esteem. **Nine** of our young men and **two** young women who, after training at different levels in academic and vocational skills are now placed in appropriate jobs.

We praise God for leading our young work force to compassionate, caring employers!

The **Boys Skill Unit** is focused on mastering the skill of screen printing, making envelopes and printing bill books voucher books, business cards, letter pads. They had the opportunity to prove their skills during the VBS 2022 when they screen printed on the take-away gifts. They are also trained in laundering skills i.e., washing, folding, ironing of clothes and house keeping skills.

The **Girls Skill Unit** is involved in assembling eco-friendly paper cups which are used by the Church and trained in kitchen chores and cooking skills. Besides candle making the girls unit has launched into making paper bags for shopping needs and paper covers for grocery stores and bakeries.

The **Weaving Unit** provides a therapeutic experience for our young people, the skill of weaving enhancing their attention, concentration and patience and controls hyperactive behavior. Colourful mats, towels and fabric are the products of this unit.

The young adults are continually trained in the concepts of time and money, reinforced in reading, writing and counting skills and in

personal hygiene and grooming so that they don't forget their basic skills required for a good quality life.

**Outreach Efforts:** The mission to reach the unreached 'special child' resulted in our partnership with the Village Project at Thirupalaivanam where ten 'special children' identified from the villages around are under going special education and need-based appropriate vocational skills training. Making colourful floor mats stitched together from rags, paper covers from newspapers and gardening skills provide a therapeutic experience.

Continued periodic prayer support to the caregivers and the families this past year, has been a source of spiritual strength to enable them to cope with their life situations

As a **Resource Centre** Asha continues to provide opportunities for study, training and research in the areas of Special Education, Social Work, Psychology, Nursing. We also provide internship opportunities for 'community social approach' concepts for various city college students.

**'Let the roots of God's Love in your life be entwined with others who need your support'**

May our Heavenly Father continue to help us remain steadfast in our vision, continually reminded of the needs and problems of the lesser privileged and to be sensitive to them.

*The Asha Family*

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If you could pray the best prayer in the world without the Holy Spirit, God would have nothing to do with it.

Charles Spurgeon

It is the duty of every Christian to be Christ to his neighbour.

Martin Luther

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**Bible Quiz No. 129–September 2022**



## **WHO IS SHE?**

Give the name of the Bible-times woman described here.

1. Wife of Jacob and mother of Joseph.
2. Mother of Moses.
3. The only female judge of Israel.
4. She discovered the secret of Samson's strength.
5. Mother of Samuel, the last judge of Israel.
6. A deaconess in the church at Cenchreae.
7. Mother of John the Baptist.
8. The woman who served while her sister listened to Jesus.
9. Widow who remarried and became David's great-grandmother.
10. She heroically dispatched Sisera with a tent peg.

Taken from Our Daily Bread Bible Word Search & Activity Book

Kindly send your answers to the church office or email [admin@thekirk.in](mailto:admin@thekirk.in) by 18<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

*Usha George*



## BENEFITS OF WALKING-2

“Doctors treat but Jesus heals”

Long walks help us clear our head, pace our thoughts and calm us down, figuratively speaking. The benefits of walking seem so obvious that they're rarely discussed. We forget that it is a great exercise that also helps us tone our legs, shed the extra weight and does not need us to have an exclusive gym membership. It quickens our heart beat, circulating more blood and oxygen to our muscles and our organs, including the brain. Experts suggest that brisk walking for 30 minutes at a moderate speed can help us burn 150 to 200 calories. Walking isn't all sports shoes and parks. During the day, we can also get up from our desk every hour or so and walk around our office or block for two whole minutes. The benefits of intense exercise are undeniable, of course, but even a few steps daily can take us a long way.

It's obvious that regular walking helps us lose weight but we must also know that the speed at which we walk could make all the difference. Researchers found that women who did three shorter but fast-paced walks in a week lost five times more belly fat than those who strolled five times a week. And that's not all, high intensity exercise also helps us lose three times more visceral fat which is wrapped around our organs like liver and kidneys and has often been linked to heart disease and diabetes.

### **1. Less likely to suffer a stroke and other cardiovascular problems**

Walking for just 2.5 hours a week, which is 21 minutes a day can cut the risk of heart disease by 30%.

### **2. Prevent cancer**

A study published in the journal Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention, and conducted by the American Cancer Society found



that walking up to 7 hours a week reduces the risk of breast cancer itself by 14%. The sample size of this group was a large 73,600 and was done over two decades, making the results of this study even more credible.

### **3.Exercise can boost our memory**

Exercise is good for the brain but walking in specific is good for boosting our memory. Regular brisk walks can slow down the shrinking of the brain and the faltering mental skills that old age often bring. Taking a short walk three times a week increased the size of that part of the brain linked to planning and memory.

### **4.Boosts our immunity**

A moderately-paced walk for about 30 to 45 minutes daily can increase the number of immune system cells in our body and over a period of time, it can have really remarkable effect on our body's ability to fight disease.

### **5.Good for old age**

Walking from an early age can help us stay mobile and independent during old age.

### **6.Curb stress eating**

Walking is one of the best ways to curb our stress eating habits. It doesn't work in isolation though. The ideal way to beat a stress eating disorder it to meditate, get good sleep and walk around 10,000 steps a day. Experts believe that stress eating is more often a symptom of an emotional or psychological problem. Walking releases endorphin into our system and reverses the cortisol levels in our body, helping to curb stress eating.

*Dr. Rajinikantha Narendranath*

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"Our business in life is not to get ahead of other people, but to get ahead of ourselves."

Maltbie Davenport Babcock

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## **Answers to Bible Quiz No. 128 – August 2022**

### **Where Is That Story in the Bible?**

1. 1 Samuel 10
2. Acts 12
3. Luke 2:41-52
4. Genesis 12
5. Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5
6. 2 Kings 2
7. Daniel 5
8. John 2
9. Joshua 7
10. Judges 4

### **The winners are:**

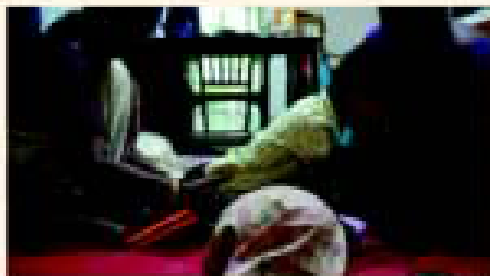
1. Mrs. J. Judith Garcia
2. Mrs. Aruna Asir
3. Mrs. Elizabeth Jayaraj
4. Mrs. Victoria Basker
5. Mrs. Suguna Joseph
6. Mrs. Indra Rajanayakam
7. Mrs. Peace Rani Sudhakar
8. Mrs. Angelin Alwin
9. Mrs. Sujatha Elizabeth Prasad
10. Mrs. Gladys Vedavimali

***Hearty Congratulations!***



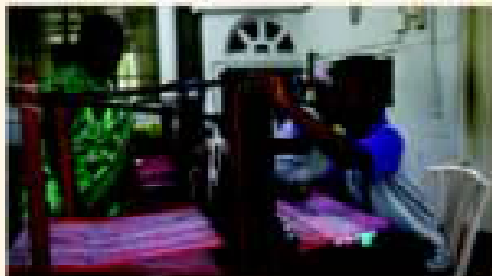
Lunch being served at  
Asha Egnore

Paperbag making at  
Thirupalavanam Vocational  
Unit



Phylo Session in  
Progress -

Weaving - Vocational Unit  
Egnore Campus





**Asha Sunday Dance by Thirupalaivanam Children**



**Asha Sunday Girls Worshipping the Lord by Dance**

