



BESIDE CHERITH

Prof. M.Y. Yohannan

•Publisher•

Phelio Books

Kolenchery - 682 311



BESIDE CHERITH

Prof. M.Y. Yohannan
Former Principal
St. Peter's College, Kolenchery



Mechankara, Kadayirippu P.O., Kolenchery - 682311,
Kerala, India Phone : [0484] 2689489, 2689889
E-mail : prof_yohannan@hotmail.com, Website : www.crfgospel.org



Publisher :
Phelio Books, Kolenchery - 682 311



Translated by
Dr. Priya Joseph
'Karunya', Tripunithura, Ernakulam Dist.



Cover Design
Swaminathan, Computer Park



Layout & Printed at
Merin Graphics, Edappally Toll, Cochin - 682 024



All rights reserved with the publisher

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

"I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son,
But I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit.
And the Lord took me as I followed the flock,
And the Lord said to me,
Go, prophesey unto my people Israel"
- Amos 7 : 14, 15

Prof. M.Y. Yohannan was born in a middle class agricultural family in Kadayiruppu, Kolenchery, Kerala. Three of his brothers died before his birth. He lost his father at the infant age of one and his surviving brother when he was two years old. He could not continue his education after passing out from the tenth standard as he was forced to take up the responsibility of managing his family affairs and working in the farm desolate and desperate.

This young man with a shattered life accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord at the age of seventeen while attending a Gospel meeting at his local church.

Prof. Yohannan started his career as a teacher in the Rajarshi Memorial High school where he had studied. During his nine - year tenure in the school, he took his graduation and post graduation, as a private student, in arts with first ranks from the Kerala University. Later, he took B.Ed. degree also with University rank. In 1964, he joined St. Peter's College and continued there for the next thirty - three years. He was appointed Principal of the same college in 1995 and retired after two years.

Even as a young teacher, he was an active member of the Voluntary missionary society in Kerala. Many well reputed and respected clergy as well as laymen sincerely participated in the activities of the Voluntary Missionary Society, which in Malayalam, was known as "Swamedhaya Suvishesha Sangham." As a result of its earnest efforts on evangelisation, a large number of people got revived in the Jacobite / Orthodox and other churches.

In 1973, a great spiritual revival swept over Kerala Prof. Yohannan was in the forefront of this movement. The revival was based on the following divine words :

"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from Heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7 : 14

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God."

Matthew 5 : 8

"Without holiness, no one will see the Lord."

Hebrews 12 : 14

When a man gets the born again experience, his deeds and words are changed. But the transformation of the inner - man, thoughts, attitudes, the old nature, etc. is the genuine sign of a true Christian.

Prof. Yohannan preached the Gospel throughout Kerala and many big cities in India. Later, he visited the United States of America several times in connection with the Lord's service. He also visited great Britain and some of the Gulf countries in the Middle East and addressed several conventions.

In 1997, Prof. Yohannan commenced the "Amruthadhara' Radio Ministry on all Tuesday evenings. It is the wholehearted encouragement of the listeners, a second programme, was started on all Saturdays from 7.30 pm to 7.45 p.m. These programmes helped to preach the Gospel to the unreached and remote areas and segments of people, like in prisons, armed force' barracks, hostels etc.

Prof. Yohannan utilized the facilities of television, one of the most influential media today, to preach the Gospel. In 2000, the Amruthadhara' TV programme was started. Presently, the thirty - minute programme is telecast at 6.30 am on Asianet News, Surya TV and Jeevan TV networks on Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings respectively.

As requested by his ever - increasing listeners and dear friends, Prof. Yohannan has published his various

messages, studies and devotions in book form. So far, as on April 2009, he has published fifty two books. Most of them are out - of - print within a short period. Few more books are getting ready for release.

Prof. Yohannan is fully engaged in the activities of the CRF by addressing massive Gospel meetings, Bible classes, prayer meetings, counselling sessions, etc. He strongly believes that the need of the hour is "the repentance of the repented."

He advocates : "It is the soul that needs change, not the religion, It's the inner - man (heart) that needs change, not the community or denomination."

Prof. Yohannan gets whole - hearted support from his wife, Alice, a retired teacher, in his Lord's service. The Yohannan's have three sons and a daughter, all married. The family is blessed with nine grandchildren.



OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

- 1 AMRUTHADHARA
- 2 AANTHARIKA SAANTHI
- 3 SUBHA BHAVI
- 4 SAANTHI THEERAM
- 5 MADHU MOZHI
- 6 MUKTHI MARGAM
- 7 NITHYA VISRANTHI
- 8 NIRAPARA
- 9 JAYAJEEVITHAM
- 10 VISWASA JEEVITHAM
- 11 VADAMALAR
- 12 DIVYARADHANA
- 13 ENIKKU KUDIPPAN THARUMO?
- 14 NEETHIMAN AAKUNNATHENGANE?
- 15 THURANNA VATHIL
- 16 VARAVUM CHILAVUM
- 17 DAIVARAJYAM
- 18 AMRUTHADHARA (ENGLISH)
- 19 ORTHUKOLVIN
- 20 KRISTHUVIL
- 21 PARISUDHATHMAVU
- 22 PARISUDHATHMA VYAPARAM
- 23 PARISUDHATHMA SAKTHI
- 24 UTHAMA GEETHAM
- 25 SANKETHA NAGARANGAL

- 26 MARUBHOOMIYILE NEERPOIKA
 27 YONA
 28 PACHAVELLAM VEENJAKKI
 29 KEREETHINTE VAKKIL
 30 ETHRATHOLAM RANDU THONIYIL?
 31 ELIYAVINTAE DAIVAM EVIDE?
 32 PRAVACHAKANALLA,
 PRAVACHAKA SISHYANUMALLA
 33 MUDRAMOTHIRAMAKKUM
 34 ENIKKU KAZHCHA PRAPIKKENAM
 35 ENIKKU ASHAKKU VAKAYUNDO?
 36 INNER PEACE (ENGLISH)
 37 AVARKKU BHAKSHIPPAN KODUPPIN
 38 GLITTERING FUTURE (ENGLISH)
 39 EKANTHATHAYUDE ANDHATHA
 40 STREAMS IN THE DESERTS (ENGLISH)
 41 WAY TO LIBERATION (ENGLISH)
 42 NINTE MRITHANMAR JEEVIKKUM
 43 VANNU PRATHAL KAZHICHUKOLVIN
 44 ENNE THOTTATHAR?
 45 SOUKYAMAKUVAN MANASSUNDO?
 46 ATHU SAHIKKAKUNNAVAN AAR?
 47 ENNE AAR VIDUVIKKUM?
 48 NANMAYUDE PANAPATHRAM
 49 PRATHYASAYUDE PRABHATHAM
 50 INIYUM VAIKANAMO?
 51 ARE YOU WILLING TO BE HEALED?
 52 KANNEERPPADAM (PART.1)

PREFACE

The book *iBeside Cherith* comprising of 16 chapters, is the twenty-first publication released by the respected Professor M.Y.Yohannan. The opportunity that I have received to write a foreword to this book is an unforgettable experience.

Even if Malayalam is my mother-tongue, I have started handling Malayalam with ease a very short while back. With this background I am truly unfit to write a foreword for Yohannan Sirís book, he being one of the greatest authorities on Malayalam literature of our time. Even so the work of the Spirit of God is to equip the unable such that they are made able.

Professor M.Y. Yohannan is a person I greatly respect. I have known him closely for the past 14 years. He is a guiding lamp to the assembly of pilgrims, including myself, who are travelling to the Heavenly Zion. His life is exemplary. His lifeís mission is to inculcate the love of Christ, and to let this love emanate to all people by spreading the Word of God throughout the world. I have heard many of his messages. As a humble servant of the Lord, a remark that he has often made is fixed to my memory.

iEvangelism is not hampered by lack of funds, but evangelism will come to standstill for lack of Holy people.í

Another fact that attracted much of my admiration is that he did God's work with great zeal, without neglecting any of his official duties. Even when he was teacher, departmental head and Principal, he carried out official responsibilities with utmost efficiency and faithfulness, while simultaneously doing evangelism giving Christ Jesus and God's work the first priority. Such people are rare to meet. I earnestly desire to emulate this example in my personal life.

ēBeside Cherithí is a book that should become the personal experience of every believer in Christ Jesus. The Christian life is a life lived in obedience to the Lord. As it is said in Deuteronomy 11:26-27, we can experience God's blessings only when we start living according to will of God. However Cherith may dry up. But God will not forsake us. Even if the raven stops bringing bread, the storehouses of the God in heaven will not become empty. Therefore do not focus on the gifts. Hold on firmly to the Giver. Look at Jesus- the author and finisher of our faith.

The prophet Elijah was a man with a nature like ours. However even when the circumstances were against him, he firmly believed and obeyed the Word of God; so God lead the prophet wonderfully.

It is God who gives a bright future. Yohannan Sir has personally experienced this God while writing this book. It is my firm conviction that all the principles outlined in this book will be of immense help to many to go forward in pilgrimage to Zion.

I pray that the Almighty God will bless increasingly this servant of the Lord with long life, health and spiritual gifts.

I pray that this book will provide heavenly happiness and peace to all people who live in this wicked world filled with whirlwinds and deception. With this aim in view, I present this book to people all over the world in God's name.

Dr. Priya Joseph,
iKARUNYAî, Tripunithura, Eranakulam.

INTRODUCTION

In the book *The Bible-the armor of light*, Mr. K.P. Appen has written thus:

I do not know how many times I have read through the Bible. I have been a reader and witness of the Bible to the time until now. It is my continual desire to remain a minister of this tent of truth. The Bible, which proclaims by using parables the history of the world and the problems that mankind faced as destiny, has been the prime power that has shaped my thought life. I meditate on certain passages from the Bible from time to time. As far as my intellectual life is concerned, this is the rejuvenation of redemption for me.

We see in these words the impartial observations of a man who is a great seeker of truth who had not only repeatedly read the Bible and inculcated its values into his life; but also experienced the glorious worth of doing so.

In the book *An Outline of the History of the World* by H.G. Wells, acknowledges the outstanding influence that the Bible has had in moulding and flourishing the culture of mankind. The overpowering influence of the Bible is revealed by great men in the Bible through their lives. I was enabled to write this book *Beside Cherith* based on Elijah, because many

facts about the life of the man with a nature like ours has touched/inspired my life such that they constantly spark my imagination.

We attribute the valuable lessons derived from the school of hardship and loneliness of Cherith behind the wonderful phenomenon of how Elijah the man of God became a suitable weapon in the hands of God of Elijah.

Beside Cherith is an excellent illustration of how ordeals and adversity can become useful, uplifting experiences for a man at any time. In this book, the crises that Elijah faced, and the divine provision for them, opens our eyes to the manner in which God is able to foster us in tough circumstances, and in the face of opposition; even if we don't live the life of a hermit and recluse like Elijah.

I would also like to express my thanks to Dr. Priya Joseph, my niece for translating the Malayalam book to English. In spite of her untiring and busy studies for her M.D.S degree, she has allotted special time and effort to fulfill the hazardous work of translation. But for her diligent efforts constant enthusiasm, this book may have never seen light. I wholeheartedly extend my sincere gratitude and prayers for her zeal to do the Lord's work.

I am deeply obliged to the respected readers of my other books for their felicitations, compliments and encouragement. I pray that the perusal of this book will shower unprecedented blessings on the readers. I especially pray that it be possible that all the readers should have a personal encounter with the God of Elijah and follow Him.



Chapter 1

And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew or rain these years except at my word." Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "Get away from here, and turn eastward, and hide by the brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. And it shall be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."

So he went and did according to the word of the Lord, for he went and stayed by the brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. 1Kings 17:1, 2

The time in which the prophet Elijah lived was that of idol worship as in the other nations who did not know the Lord.

Ahab the reigning king of Israel at that time and the Queen Jezebel, both promoted idol worship. The idols of Asherah and Baal crowned the distress and troubles of the worshippers of the truth. The idol worship of Baal arose with the staunch support of the King and Queen and those who were interested in serving the idol-the priests of Baal continued to multiply. Even at that time, the prophet Elijah continued to stand with

great fervour and devotion for the Lord and for worship of the true God.

For this, the prophet Elijah derived support, inspiration and spiritual insight from the prophet Samuel. The prophet Samuel was like a diamond star that shone in the dark ages. There was a time, after the period of the Judges when the nation underwent moral decline and spiritual vision was extinguished. It was a period when both the king and his subjects turned away from God and forsook true worship.

At all times in history there are instances of leaders and nations turning away from God.

That was when the Eternal God lifted Samuel by giving him His Word. 'Speak Lord for your servant is listening', (1 sam.3:10) was the attitude of humility, submission and obedience with which Samuel came. He received the revelation from God and conveyed it to the people. By this there was a spiritual revival among the people.

In all ages, society has experienced a spiritual renaissance through the prophets who received the Word of God. The prophet Samuel travelled through many territories. Wherever he went he started small prayer groups or schools for prophets. The young men gathered and the people started to get together to pray, where the prophet Samuel gave them leadership.

The prophet Samuel had established a school for prophets in Shiloh. There were similar schools in Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho and Jordan. In all these schools there were disciples. They would gather together and pray. They worked hard for the worship of the true God to grow and flourish. Samuel gave them leadership and guidance.

Thus from such a small school in Tishbe; a remote village arose a spiritual man like the prophet Elijah. He was called Elijah the Tishbite because he bore witness to the Lord in a small, unsophisticated village called Tishbe. He glorified the name of the Master of life in Heaven. He entered the arena of the Lord's ministry with great enthusiasm. That was what Elijah the Tishbite did.

Elijah observed the moral degradation of the people and the decline of true worship. The people had turned to idols—they worshipped dumb idols. Baal worship had spread throughout the nation. The king Ahab and Jezebel were leading this.

Baal worship was flourishing under the patronage of royal power, pomp, and authority. The people of God were weakened and becoming corrupted. Filled with the Word of God and the power of the Spirit, this unsophisticated rustic servant of God proceeded to the king's palace. He pointed his finger at the king Ahab who was seated on the throne and spoke thus:

“As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand there shall not be dew or rain these years except at my word.”¹
Kings 17:1

The courage of Elijah! The children of God are courageous. They are not anxious whether they will be physically tortured, or whether their existence will be threatened. That is not at all of concern to them. Will society isolate them? They are not the least bothered. Will they experience loss of worldly goods and possessions? They are not the least worried, burdened or offended. At all times the prophets of God who spoke the Word of God faced opposition. Everyone would hate, abhor, isolate and find fault with them and spread false rumours about them. They would

try to tarnish their image, and demoralise them by character assassination.

But the Spirit of God remained with them, sustaining them with strength and might, enabling them to stand with courage.

Thus Elijah courageously went to the king's palace and spoke- "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand"- were the words with which he began. It implied that the

reason for his courage was the name of the Lord, whom he had with him.

Elijah was firmly convinced that the God whom he served was Omnipotent. He went to the palace in the name of the Lord, with the support of the true God. On his own he did not have strength; but he knew that even if he was weak, God would strengthen him. Many years later the Apostle Paul said:

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phili.4:13)

If we want strength, hold on tightly to God. If we want might, strengthen yourself in the power of God's might. Be strong in the Lord and the power of his might- was the counsel that the apostle Paul gave the Christians of Ephesus

The power of God's might.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, whose heart is set on pilgrimage. Psalm 84:5

Brothers, do we have might in the Lord? Is the firm resolution that "whatever be the difficulty I am facing I will never abandon God", strengthening you to stand firm in

Christ?

The psalmist declared, "God is my refuge and strength. He is the very present help in times of trouble." (Ps 46:1)

Therefore we shall not fear though the earth be removed and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. Though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. This was what he proceeded to sing.

He said he did not fear. Why should there be fear when the Lion of the tribe of Judah is with us? If the miraculous power of the Heavenly king sustains us then why should we fear?

Why should we lose courage?

Therefore Elijah courageously proceeded to the palace. His strength was in the Lord whom he served. Elijah's confidence was in that he served the Eternal God, the True God. That is strength; not that I have ability of my own. But there is a Christ who strengthens me, who gives me grace and power!

The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy thus: And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because he counted me faithful putting me in his ministry. (1 Thim. 1:12)

Dear friend, do you have power in Christ?

You may be an ordinary man without much education, or academic qualifications or good health; even so are you able to declare that Christ is in you?

Find shelter in Christ, rely on him, gain strength in Him! Let Him become the refuge of your life. Will you dedicate your life at the foot of His cross?

As you read these words will you make a promise to Christ.

Lord, because you died for me on the cross I will live for You from this day on. I dedicate myself at your feet. Have mercy on me. Clothe me with your strength. Fill me with the infinite power of your Precious Blood. Let my heart overflow with your Heavenly love. Let Your name be glorified.



Chapter 2

Elijah, the man of God- and the God of the Elijah. The God of Elijah lives indeed!

Elijah was a man who lived a holy life in the midst of moral degradation. He was a man of God who expounded righteousness in an evil generation and courageously held fast to the worship of the true God, even when surrounded by idol worship.

The prophet Elijah presented himself before King Ahab and spoke thus: *As surely as the Lord God of Israel lives, there shall not be dew or rain in these days, except at my word!* 1Kings
17:1

King Ahab looked at Elijah, stunned. Who is this man who dared to come to the palace and fearlessly declare, *There shall not be dew or rain in these days, except at my word!*?

But Elijah had already turned and walked away. He had delivered his message. He had no more to say. His ministry in Ahab's palace was accomplished. Now he need not wait a second longer. All his steps were directed by God. Everything was led by the Holy Spirit.

When he returned, God spoke to him, "My son, Ahab has set his eye on you, he is seeking an opportunity to kill you. To escape from Ahab's hand, do as I tell you. Get away from here and turn eastward, and go to the brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. Hide there, My son."

Beside the brook Cherith there were dense thickets. God had instructed him to live there faint and wearied by the hot sun.

Elijah heartily accepted the Word of God, His counsel. What perfect obedience! "Hide by the brook Cherith. Drink from the waters of the brook. When you are hidden in the bush by Cherith, I have commanded the raven to provide food for you in secret."

What is the implication of this? The ways of the Living God are not like those of men, nor is it in accordance with man's reasoning; it is beyond his comprehension. If any man had proceeded to where he was hidden by Cherith to supply him with food, his hiding place would surely have come to the king's notice. He would have been killed.

Here we see God protecting his beloved devotee, God labouring to guard him from harm in the midst of adverse circumstances.

God searched and opened up avenues to achieve this purpose. Note that God told Elijah: "Hide by the brook Cherith.. And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."

God had commanded ravens.

By nature a raven snaps up any food from a man's hand and flies off with it. It is a bird which cleverly pecks up, and flies off with any bread that a child might be holding in his

hand. Contrary to this, the raven was commanded to supply Elijah with food!

How wondrous are the ways of the Eternal, Heavenly God!

There is a God who feeds us; protects us! The God who feeds the young ravens when they cry; who continually watches and over, and cares for how the lilies of the field grow. Man does not know how the lilies grow. But there is good God who knows, controls, guides and leads all things. We see God providing for His servant here.

God worked a miracle using means that seemed impossible. A raven to supply food to a man! How would the raven deliver it? It was supposed to bring Elijah bread and meat. Did the raven hold it between its feet, or did it hang it on its neck? If so, how would it fly unimpeded then? Dear readers, it is a subject that is thought-provoking indeed. Nevertheless, we need not worry unnecessarily about it.

Is there anything impossible for the Almighty God? Indeed nothing is impossible for Him. The Living God is a God of miracles. There is no end to miracles even in this age. He is able to work miracles in your life too. He is powerful enough to remove the burden of debt from your life. Are you sunken deep in debt, with no hope for the future and in much turmoil? He is able to give you peace. He is able to provide you help by means which may seem improbable. Believe that God will use the hands of those people who had hitherto used cunning and deceit to steal from you; to help you now.

You may be ill with a terrible disease, which is chronic and incurable. All forms of treatment may have been fruitless, and you may be in total despair. Your wife may be living in agony; your children may be sighing, and sobbing, and in deep depression. Even so my dear friend, God in heaven is able to cure you of your disease. There is a Living God

Who knows exactly which part of your body is affected by the disease, what is the etiology behind it, to which parts has it spread and proliferated, the sites where the disease-causing cells are hidden, the condition of your blood, the configuration of the vessels through which it flows; everything!

The Lord Jesus said: "The hairs of your head are all numbered." (Mat 10:30) Our Beloved Lord Jesus has said that not one hair would fall without the Heavenly Father knowing it!

Dear friend do you know the number of hairs on your head? But God in Heaven knows. If even one hair should fall, God sees it.

Look, the God who knows you, Son, the God who loves you, Young man, the God who cares for you, Sister, the God who aims only at your benefit; and is eagerly waiting to perform miracles in your life stands beside you now. God says: the God of miracles is still alive. Submit your entire lifetime to the hands of this living God.

Yield your life to the hands of the Lord Jesus, who accepted the five loaves of bread and two fish. The bread and fish you do not have, but submit your body, soul and spirit to Him. The wise men offered gold, frankincense and myrrh. My Son, you may not have these; but you can offer your body, soul and spirit to Christ's hands.

Let Christ take charge of your life. Let Him make your life beautiful, remove your misfortunes, put an end to your hardship, and relieve you of sickness. May he grant you healing, peace and happiness. Let him disseminate peace in your family, and transform your life with prosperity. Let the miraculous power of His precious blood awaken you.

Let the Heavenly King of kings descend, and abide in you and fill you with Heavenly love. May you receive the inestimable gift that the Cross of the Living Christ bestows.

The God who fed Elijah, indeed the God who fed him with ravens still lives! The raven supplied him with bread and meat at the right times. That is what we read in the scriptures. The raven brought him bread and meat daily in the morning, and in the evening. He would drink water from the brook. The raven was always on time. Poor Elijah, a rustic and an unsophisticated young man, was probably unaccustomed to regular mealtimes. Under normal circumstances, for him, having food depended on its availability. But now, when he obeyed God's Word, he received a regular supply of food, at the exact times ñmorning and evening.

How would the raven have obtained the food? The Word of God does not reveal it; it is kept hidden. Maybe a child of God would wrap up a parcel of bread and meat for the raven to carry. Maybe the raven would deliver the parcel to Elijah and fly off to the bush and wait, perched on a branch, till it saw Elijah arise, after having the satisfying meal of bread and meat. All this is construed from my humble imagination.

God in heaven supplied His servant with food using a raven. Child of God, God is powerful enough to work miracles in your life too.

Son, God is able to remove the shortage of money you may be facing. Daughter, are you experiencing scarcity of love? Do you desire to be loved, but face a famine of it? Deprived of love, do you desperately hunger for it? Son, maybe your wife does not give you compassion, love or respect. Child of God, maybe you do not receive respect from your children.

Today there is a famine of love everywhere. My dear ones, today families experience a want of unity and amicability. God will send you bread and meat at the right times. He will put an end to your famine. Miracles will take place in your life. The Almighty God who provides for you in times of famine, is about to work a miracle in your life today.

Submit your life to His hands. Accept Him. Give him your word, start a new life, bidding farewell to sin, and experience the healing of a sinless life. Welcome Christ as your Lord and Leader.

Lord, from today on, I am yours. Tell Jesus: ìMaster, from today on I am yours. From today, I will live as a new creation.î

Give God your assurance, and let Him bless you!



Chapter 3

Elijah, prophet of the Living God, hid beside the brook Cherith. He continued to drink water from the brook. That was a time when there were no rains. No rain or dew. It was a time the scorched countryside was getting devastated due to aridity. All vegetation was drying up, and withering away. Everywhere there were piles of dried leaves. There were no foodgrains, rice or wheat, and no food. But the man of God did not face want of food. because God had commanded the raven to feed him. The raven continued to bring him bread and meat. Elijah would drink from the brook Cherith. After satisfying himself with the timely bread and meat brought by the ravens, Elijah continued to live hidden among the bushes by the brook Cherith. Even so, what happened soon after?

The Word of God says:

The raven brought him bread and meat in the morning and evening, he would drink from the brook. And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. 1Kings.17:6-7

After many days the brook dried up. There was no water and no rain. How can a man live without drinking water? Elijah saw the brook dry, waterless, and parched. He was thirsty.

What was to happen next in his life, where was he to go, what was to be the source of water? Such thoughts would have passed through Elijah's mind, as he sat beside the dry brook, sighing deeply.

Are you sitting grieved over certain brooks that have dried up in your life? Daughter is your womb dry and barren? Have you not had the fortune of bearing a tiny, lovely little babe? Have you been married several years without having the pleasure of seeing a little one? You have not had the good fortune of delivering and bringing up a child.

Is not your heart dry and parched with longing? Is not your womb barren? Is not your life sinking deep in despair and torment? The Living God was watching Elijah.

Dear friend, the God who sees you also sees the brooks that fail in your life. Son, isn't your health failing you? Is your body getting weak? Is the vigour and valour of your body getting snuffed out? Is your body losing its energy and vivacity? Is your health getting drained?

Cherith became drained and dry. The water of the brook Cherith was exhausted, leaving it dry and parched. Dear friend, what aspects in your life are depleted and dry? Are the means of financial income closed? Son, have you lost your job? Are you struggling without a job or income? Daughter, have you come to the dire situation of living in a rented house, after having had to sell whatever you had?

Are you in great anguish because you are unable to make the rental payments? Friend, have diverse problems rocked your household, making life problematic?

The Brook Cherith became dry and waterless. Is any reader of these words is facing exhaustion of whatever springs he had up-till now in life? Son, springs that have run dry, dwindling

of love. The goodwill of kith and kin may have dwindled. The love and faithfulness of co-workers may diminish and fail. Everywhere you may experience a decline in the moral support that you were once accustomed to. Previously you had enjoyed popularity. You had a place in society, you had status and worth. You were esteemed among the aristocracy, and regarded as of fine lineage. Have you suffered loss of all this? Son, has Cherith dried up for you? As you read these words, look back at your life, is not your Cherith getting drained and dry? Has Cherith led you to a dry and parched experience? However, today let me show you a spring of water.

This spring is unfailing. It will never become dry. It is the spring of Golgotha. It is the spring that flows from the pierced side of the King of kings. It is the blood and water, which our merciful Lord let flow from His side, that wells up as a spring of eternal life.

It is the living spring of blood and water that stemmed from the wound of the side of the holy body of the Lord who declared, "Let him who is thirsty come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John.7:37)

My friend, have you seen the spring, the spring of life of the living , who declared: "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again. He who drinks of the water I shall give him will never thirst again." (John. 4:13-14) You need not travel to Golgotha to find this spring. Child of God, you need not embark on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to find the source of this spring of life. A visit to the country of Israel is not obligatory for this. Look even as you read these words that spring is in search of you and is beside you! That spring has opened up beside you.

The spring that welled up for Hagar in the desert, is now open beside you for you. The living spring that opened up in the desert is here beside you. It is the fountain that springs out of the sacred heart of the merciful Christ. Will you drink of this spring? Will you rely on this spring? If you drink of this spring you will never thirst again. You have tried drinking many things that this world has to offer to fulfil your thirst. You have sought liquor as a means to derive peace of mind. You have resorted to smoking, snuff, and drugs in the vain hope that these would offer you tranquillity.

Have these fulfilled your thirst? No my son, nothing that this world has to offer can satisfy your thirst. No springs of this world can eliminate thirst. Neither the goodwill of your friends nor the counsel or moral support of your companions can quench your thirst.

The spring that fulfils thirst is the spring of life; it never runs dry. It is the spring of His precious blood. You can derive refreshment from this spring. It will confer you comfort and peace. You can gain forgiveness of sins from it. It is the spring that the prophet Zechariah foresaw, when he spoke about the fountain that shall be opened for sin and uncleanness in Zechariah 13:1; indeed the fountain of Golgotha, which is a source of comfort.

Even as you read these words, that fountain is welling up beside you. Just drink of this spring, my son, my daughter. Take refuge in the sacred blood. Begin a new life without sin. Give Him your word and commence a new life.

Elijah observed that the brook was dry.

Your popularity may decline. Many may refuse to be associated with you. Your former friends may view you as an enemy, and betray you. They may circulate false rumors

about you. They will not waste any chance to destroy you, but will seek loopholes; plotting and waiting for an opportune time. My son, do not be anxious. The God who has placed you at Cherith, is able to provide for you, and protect you.

The God who has commanded you to hide beside Cherith, has provided for your future. The One who has begun things is able to complete them. He is the author of our faith. He is also the finisher, the one who begins and also the one who completes things. Do not fear my son; as you read these words, child of God, He says to you, I am the Beginning and the End. (Rev. 22:13) In fact, He says, I am the beginningless beginning and the endless end.

Accept Him, make a solemn promise to him. Commence a new life without sin, Lord, from today on I am yours. Lord Jesus, let me drink of the fountain that stems from your pierced side. Let me bathe in that fountain and be purified, become holy, so that I will be numbered among the gathering of saints.

Shower Your grace on me. Let Your Spirit abide on me, guide me in your ways. Protect me in the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Give me the good fortune of becoming a holy witness of the Heavenly king of kings.



Chapter 4

And it happened that after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. Then the word of the Lord came to him saying, ìArise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.î

The God of Elijah provided for him, His servant. Indeed, the God of Elijah provided for Godís Elijah. How wonderful!

The God who had instructed Elijah, ìHide beside the brook Cherith, I have commanded the raven to feed you thereî; now that the brook had dried up, said to him, ìArise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.î

The God fosters, provides, feeds, who sustains us without experiencing want of food.

In later times King David said: ìThe Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His nameís sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For You are with me.î

Psalms 23:1-4

David declared thus because he had personally experienced how God cares, guards, protects, sustains, uplifts, and makes to grow. This motivated him to state: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

When our merciful Lord commenced his public ministry, he stood in the synagogue at Nazareth, and declared thus: "But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout the land. But to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow." (Luke:4:25-26)

There were many widows at that time, but Elijah was sent to a widow at Zarephath. It is good that the prophet went there, and that he was welcomed there. It is a blessing to have a man of God in the house, good fortune for the household indeed. There is no doubt that it will create a graceful atmosphere in the household. In later times, when Eliza visited the house at Shunem, blessing and prosperity budded there.

God commanded Elijah to go to Zarephath. Blessing came upon the widow and her son, and on the land of Zarephath. The neighbours of the widow were also blessed. God sent the prophet Elijah to the widow's house; she received and welcomed him.

"He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name

of a disciple, assuredly I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.† Mathew 10:40-43

. iHe who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophetís reward.† Dear friends, if we welcome children of God, blessing ensues. It is a blessing to receive children of God, and extend hospitality to them.

I recall my childhood days, when my mother would invite evangelists to our house and arrange food and accommodation for them. God was merciful in that He had endowed my mother with such a perspective. God had gifted my mother the grace to honour and respect people who preached the Word of God, and cordially welcome them into our home. What good fortune!

Today I have grown into an evangelist of the Lord. God has given me the fortune of travelling throughout the world far and wide as a missionary of my merciful Lord. There are children of God wherever I go, and they welcome me and extend hospitality to me. They receive me willingly and respectfully.

When we visit a place in Godís name, and are received gladly and welcomed the person who receives us is blessed. When the Lord sends us, the house we visit and the land itself will receive blessing.

iMost assuredly I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives the One who sent Me.† John13:20

God said: Go to Zarephath, that belongs to Sidon and dwell there. I have commanded a widow there to provide food for you. Sidon was ruled by a gentile King, Ethbaal who served Baal and promoted idol worship. His daughter Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, the king of Israel who was hunting Eliah to

murder him. Humanly thinking, Sidon was the most unsafe place for Eliah. But, God sent his servant to the same place itself! How wonderful are the ways of our Lord! St. Paul says:

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen (Rom. 11:33-36)

What was the situation in Zarephath? At that time famine was rampant in Zarephath. People were dying of hunger. Already many had died of starvation. Hordes of animals lay dead from lack of water to drink; no green grass not even dry stubs. In the burning heat like that of a flaming fire, under the fierce onslaught of the hot sun, the land lay shrivelled and parched. Flocks of birds, withered from the heat; fell off branches and were struggling. Human beings too were facing death from starvation. The land was in agony and great adversity.

To this famine-ravaged area was Elijah sent by God. How wonderful are the ways of God. God knew that this widow would provide for Elijah, that he would find sustenance there, and what He was going to do there. When God sent him to the widow's house, He told him; I have commanded a widow in Zarephath to provide for you. What a miracle!

Son, there is a God who will command your supervisor or to favour you. Young man, there is a God who will command your parents to be favourable to you. Dear friend, God will act on your behalf and command your employer to give you a job. There is a God who will speak on your behalf to the concerned people, to consider an appropriate marriage

proposal for you. Son, the God who decides your future, is speaking to certain people for you, so that you can secure an admission to brighten your academic prospects. Did you know that? Child of God, the Jehovah God commanded the widow of Zarephath. I am sending my servant to you. You must provide food for him, sustain and foster him.

Friends, there is a God who cares for us.

In later times, the apostle Peter wrote: 'Cast all your cares on Him, because He cares for you.' The words that he wrote 2000 years ago are relevant even today.

There is a God who cares for us. There is a God who watches over us with fond affection. He is a God who relieves our anxieties. He is a God who sees our sorrows, and wipes away our tears. He mops up our heartaches and grief. He is a God who comforts us. He sustains us with food.

Son, today you have your fill of food. Who gave you this? Your children never need go to bed hungry, who provides for them? Is it not God? Was there not a time when you did not have a spare set of clothing, other than what you wore?

Today your family dwells in contentment. Who granted you this? Is it not our Lord and God. If God gives, it will not cease; infact, it will be an abundant blessing.

Child of God, will you humble yourself at this moment?

Can you see a God who cares for you at this time? He provided for you on Golgotha. He said, 'Woman, this is your son; this is your mother.' Jesus Christ who gave His mother and His disciple, mutual responsibility of each other; now stands beside you, wishing to see that you are not left orphaned.

If your beloved wife has passed away, this God is beside you, seeking to comfort and shelter you. Daughter, if your beloved husband has left this world early, this Heavenly God is standing close to support and shelter you.

Look at Him, accept and welcome Him, honour His prophets, give your word to Him and be transformed into a new creation. Begin a new life. May God bless us.



Chapter 5

And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. Then the Word of the Lord came to him saying, *Arise, go to Zarephath which belongs to Sidon and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you. So he arose and went to Zarephath.* 1Kings 17:7-10

Elijah was a man with a nature just like ours, so we read in the fifth chapter of the book of James. Elijah, who had a nature just like ours, was a prophet who obeyed God. In the seventeenth and eighteenth chapter of the Book of Kings, we see two instance of Elijah obeying God's commands.

The first command was *Go and hide yourself.*

The second command was *Go and show yourself*

Elijah obeyed both commands. It was his nature to blindly obey whatever God commanded. That is the nature of the people of God, the trait of a man of God; it is the attribute of any child of God.

God commands, man obeys. Elijah was indeed a man with a nature just like ours.

Dear friends, have we obeyed God? Have we valued His commands? Have we partaken of His instruction, His words and commandments like we would drink honey? Have we experienced its sweetness?

Respect and esteem the Word of God.

The cause of the moral degradation of man, infact the origin of the fall of man can be seen in the third chapter of the book of Genesis. Man disobeyed God's command. He ate the fruit that God had commanded not to eat. God had prohibited him from eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The first man disobeyed that command. He was motivated to do so by Satan.

God exists; so does Satan, Christ exists; so does the Antichrist. There is good and evil, life and death, heaven and hell.

People of God; Satan's intention is to destroy the great and glorious future that is kept in store for you. The devil; the thief comes to steal, kill and destroy. Our merciful Lord referred to Satan as the enemy, the devil, the wicked one and the thief. Satan is a liar, and the father of those who tell lies. Satan comes to deceive and destroy man.

Elijah; the man with a nature just like ours, was not only a foreteller, but also a forth teller. The foreteller predicts things of the future. The forth teller describes impending events in detail. He was therefore both a foreteller and a forth teller.

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours. God commanded him to hide by the brook, Cherith. Elijah did so. God commanded the raven. The raven obeyed and provided food to Elijah.

In the Bible, the first mention of a raven is made in the seventh verse of the eighth chapter of the book of Genesis.

We see a portion about Noah freeing a mountain-raven in the seventh verse of the eighth chapter in Genesis. The first bird, that God mentions is raven. The crow is an unclean creature; worthless and ugly. Yet God used it to feed his devotee.

Child of God, no matter how low your self-esteem, or however much others degrade you for lack of education or finances, segregating you as worthless and poor, there is a God who honours you, and uses you!

The God who used a worthless, despicable, ugly crow with a harsh voice to feed his servant; uses insignificant, poor people even today.

God continues to use people whom society does not honour or esteem. The Living God is the One who works miracles.

God used a crow. Now God is about to use a widow.

Arise, go to Zarephath which belongs to Sidon and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.

A poor widow who had nothing. A simple woman who lived in grief over her husband's death. A widow who had no means to live on, who lived in abject poverty. God used such a woman.

Later as we read the first book of Kings, seventeenth chapter, we understand from certain hints that certain unwanted events had occurred in her life previously. She had a son born to her after her husband's death. She had spoilt her life by immersing it in sin. After her husband's death, she had lived with another man, and borne a son by him, In such

immoral living had she spent her life. But God used even her. God can use anyone.

Child of God, your past life may have been steeped in sin. Daughter, you may be ashamed of your past which has been despicable, and spent in immorality. Son, you may not have obeyed your parents. You may have raised a hand against your Father, and grieved your mother. You may have pushed your mother outside, or even struck her in order to please your wife.

Son, you may have carried out certain illegal activities in your workplace. You may have fostered certain illegitimate relationships. Your simple, pure, and innocent wife may not have known. Your life may have been most despicable, but God desires to renew you, and make use of you. The God who wants to use you, desires to purify and sanctify your life, in order for you to become useful in His hands. Look He is here right now, standing beside you.

Child of God, Elijah was commanded by God to go Zarephath. There God commanded a widow to feed him and provide for him. What a blessing to receive God's command, God's directive; and be a part of the plan that He is going to use. How fortunate it is to hear it!

What good fortune it is indeed to obtain an opportunity to be a part of the divine agenda on earth. Friend, let us submit ourselves to be a partner with God's wonderful plan on earth.

If anyone asks you as to why you are untying the colt, tell Him the Lord needs it. (Lke. 19:31)

The Lord mounted on a young donkey. It had been lying tied up until then. The donkey was fated to be killed by breaking its neck. This was according to the scripture.

In Exodus 13:13, 34:20, ð If it is not redeemed with a lamb then its neck should be broken.í Such was to be the fate of this donkey, whom the disciples untied, released from its bondage, and brought to the Lord.

Among animals the most suitable creature for transport is the horse. It is the strongest, can run the fastest, and has the dexterity for battle. But the Lord did not choose a horse. ìA horse is a vain hope for safety, neither shall it deliver any by its great strengthî (Ps. 33:17) My friends, the living Christ chose an unclean animal, one with the harshest voice, with the least intelligence, one who only knew how to carry burdens. The living God has selected you, and He is coming to you to release you from your bondage. ìIf anyone asks you as to why you are untying the colt, tell Him the Lord needs it.î

Jesus needs you. My Son, Jesus needs you. Give your life to the Lord. Give your shattered life to Him. The life which the Devil has toyed with, and destroyed! Will you give this life that the enemy, the devil has been using most shamefully, into the hands of the Creator?

Right now, will you pledge your life to Christ, Will you give your life to obeying God's word like the prophet Elijah? He will foster you, feed you, make you flourish and grow; uplift you, bless you, and take you to Heavenly bliss. He will guide you through paths of blessing. He will give you a glorious future. The despair in your life will vanish; as will the grief, scars, damage and ruin. Therefore accept Jesus. May the name of the Lord be praised and glorified for ever .



Chapter 6

So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering some sticks. And he called her, and said : *“Please bring a little water in a cup that I may drink.”*

And as she was going to get it, he called her, and said, *“Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.”*

Then she said, *“As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in the bin, and a little oil in the jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.”* *1Kings 17:10-12*

The prophet Elijah went to Zarephath in obedience to God’s command. When he reached Zarephath, he saw the widow gathering firewood. She had a little boy with her, her son. Both mother and son were gathering firewood to use as fuel to cook a meal. The prophet called out to her, asking for a cup of water. He had reached there without having a drink of water for a long interval. He had departed from the brook Cherith after its water had dried up. Now he was extremely thirsty. The man of God was parched with thirst when he met

the widow, and requested her for water. Even as she was on her way to get water, he called out to her for a morsel of bread.

He wanted water as well as bread. He wanted to alleviate both thirst and hunger. He let her know of his dire needs. He does so with confidence because God has told him to do so. God had declared that He has commanded a widow in Zarephath to provide for him.

Therefore, the prophet relied solely on the promise of the living God, on His Word alone when he requested the widow for a cup of water as well as a morsel of bread.

The woman looked at him in sympathy and in desperation, worn out as she was; and admitted her helplessness to the man of God, as she had just a little flour in her bin and some oil in her jar.

She had planned to make one last loaf of bread and eat it with her son. They were gathering firewood to cook one last loaf of bread. They wanted to eat not to live, because she had nothing more to eat. They wanted to eat and then to await death due to starvation, like many others. They were going to eat and die.

The widow knew for certain that death was imminent. She well knew that she had reached the end of her life. Her son too had come to realise this fact. She stated that they wanted to eat the bread and die.

However, the God in Heaven was able to transform a woman who was going to die after eating a meal, to a person who gave her food away; and yet lived. She was going to eat and die, now she was about to give her last crust away, and live.

Master, I have a little flour, a handful in my bin. In my jar, I have a little oil. I was planning to make a pancake, and eat it with my son and then die.†

In life, who all see a bleak future, and are in despair over impending death? Is there anyone who is helpless, like an orphan, beseeching aid from others, yet deprived of it, who sees all doors closed, faced with nothing but despair.

Once a lady told me : I am forlorn, helpless, without support, abandoned, my husband has divorced me. He is living with another woman.

Death has taken my husband away early, leaving me despondent.

A Man told me : My wife has abandoned me, and our beloved children, seeking pleasure and other men. I am left alone, How long can I survive without my wife? I loved her, but she did not love me. Hearts that long for love! Lives that pine for whatever have been lost. As you read these words, is there anyone in such sorrow?

There was a small child, who had lost his father at an early age. His father had loved him very much. It was his mother who brought him up after his death. But he was deprived of his mother's care soon. She was remarried and left. Then it was his grandmother who brought him up. But this child was in despair; I do not have a father nor a mother; I am forlorn.

Then his grandmother told him, My child, don't talk like that; you have a father. He is in Heaven, the God of Heaven is your father. Just affirm that God is your father. Declare it with your mouth.

He did so, and he grew up asserting this fact. He studied and rose to a high position in life. When he was 24 years old, he became world-famous for discovering the Law of Gravity. Yes, this was Sir Isaac Newton, the famous scientist! God's hand was behind bringing him up into a world famous scientist.

Isaac Newton was a person who grew up asserting that God was his father.

Do you say that you don't have anyone on earth to care for you, Do you cry feeling forsaken? "There is nobody to love me, care for me or speak a kind word to me. How long since someone spoke a sweet word of comfort to me, I yearn for a pleasant word from someone". Are you saying so?

All that I hear from everyone are words that cut the heart, rough words, that create inner turmoil, that wound the emotions like sharp thorns. Maybe you think, I am abandoned by everyone, is it not better that I die?

As you read these words, see Lord Jesus Christ. Christ loves you. Christ cares for you. Christ's hand reached out to transform the woman, who was going to eat and die. The God of heaven performs miracles. Son, don't think that your life is over, that your future looks bleak. There is a God who is able to care for you, watch over you, foster you and make you flourish.

"For I know the thoughts that I think towards you," says the Lord, "thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."
Jeremiah 29 :11

"There is a hope in your future," says the Lord, "that your children shall come back to their own border."
Jeremiah 31:17

God who can give you a bright future lives and loves you. He is a loving God.

He is alive, and He cares for you. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours. He told the woman that he understood her predicament; that there was only a little flour in the bin and meagre amount of oil in her jar, and that she wanted to prepare

a pancake for a last meal for herself and her son, before dying.

But he reassured her, telling not to fear, but to carry out her work after preparing a cake for him, and bringing it to him. First for God.

The Lord Jesus at the outset of His public ministry, in His first sermon on the mount, said: "And do not seek what you should eat, or what you should drink, or wear, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things, the nations of this world seek after, but your Heavenly Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you."

Mathew 6:31-33

God will give us whatever we need, everything we need.

But first we should seek His kingdom, and His righteousness.

Trust in the Lord, and do good, dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.

Psalm 37:3-5

God is able to sustain you. Give God the first place. Give God's work, and God the supreme priority. God will protect you, make you grow and attain great heights, he will sustain, and care for you. This is what His Word says.

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, the God of our salvation.

Psalm 68:19-20

Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you,
he shall never let the righteous fall Psalm
55:22

Child of God, will you rely on Him absolutely? Will you open your heart to Him? Will you give Him your word and accept Him as the Lord of your life?

Offer yourself at His feet at this minute, and tell Him "Lord, from today on I am yours. From today, I am a new creation. O, one who died for me on the cross, from today on I will live for You!"



Chapter 7

And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear, go and do as you have said, but make a small cake for me from it first, and bring it to me, and afterward make some for yourself and your son." For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, "The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth."

So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and her household ate for many days. The bin of flour was not used up, nor the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord, which He had spoken by the prophet Elijah.

1 Kings 17:13-16

The word of the God is so miraculous. It is good fortune to receive the word of God. The flour in the bin will not fail nor will the oil in the jar run dry. This was commanded by God. The woman went and made a cake, and she went quickly and gave it to the prophet.

The fire was burning and the pan was on the fire ready for the oil to be poured on it, and a cake to be made.

She looked into the bin, there was flour for one more cake. Good! She looked carefully into the jar. Yes, there was enough

oil for one more cake. She took the oil and the flour and prepared one more cake, and placed it into a vessel. Again, when she looked, she saw there was more flour and oil. What good fortune, she thought, and she prepared another cake. And again, and yet again another cake, and so on. The flour in the bin did not cease, nor did the oil in the jar run dry.

She and her son had their fill of food. They provided a room for the prophet on the upper floor. I see this in my imagination. She must have sent one more cake of bread to the prophet with her son. And again and again. The prophet would have said, I have had enough. I am satisfied, my hunger is satiated.†

The widow and her son too ate sumptuously.

And yet there was flour left in the bin, and oil remaining in the jar. And so she prepared a meal again. By this time she thought of her neighbours who were starving, and she desired to call them over for a meal. She called them, the poor people, how long since they had food! How many deaths due to starvation!

Dearly beloved, as you read this, do you think of your neighbours who are in anguish? There are people who are faint from thirst. People who long for the food that leads to eternal life.

Here food was given to those who were famished. The famine and hunger of the neighbours were alleviated.

Child of God, if you obey the word of God, it will be a blessing for others, many starving souls will be saved. Many who deserve to go to eternal hell, will receive the right to eternal Heaven.

Some may fear the future because of an insecure family life. Those who are sinking into the depths of despair, into

the dreadful abyss of depression, will become radiant with hope. Life will be transformed to one filled with joy and mirth. Peace will permeate throughout your life. Happiness will come to your possession. Just obey the word of God.

The prophet obeyed the Word of God, and went to Zarephath. The widow obeyed the word of God, and made a cake and gave it to the prophet. The flour in the bin did not cease, nor did the oil in the jar run dry. An unfailing source of abundant food!

Can you see this in your imagination? Just think, every morning the children, women, and other starving people crowding in front of the widow's house for food. Practically all the people in the locality gathered to the widow's house daily.

Child of God, let your life become the means by which the hunger of others can be stilled. Let many derive relief through you. Whatever possessions you have are a gift from God.

The prophet knew that Cherith was a gift of God as were that the widow's flour and oil. He also knew that the crow which was used to provide for him was also a gift of God. Everything was God's gift.

Cherith may run dry, but God does not abandon. The crow may cease to carry food, but the storehouse of the God in heaven is not emptied. God's heavenly storehouses are perpetually bountiful. His rich treasury of blessings is overflowing. It is pulsating with abundant life.

What a wonderful God is He! Don't hold on to the gifts, hold fast to the Giver. Look at Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. The gifts are given by God.

But do not rely on them. Children are given by God. But don't rely on them. A loving husband is given by God. Even so, my daughter, don't depend on your husband. If you have

a loving, affectionate, obedient wife who is of good character and leads a pure life, it is God's gift, my son. But let it not make you proud, or reliant on people.

The Giver alone is to be relied on. In Him alone should you take refuge. Look, He is standing close to you. Leave the gifts and hold fast to the Giver

Elijah found abundant food in that house. All the people in the neighbourhood had plenty. When God starts to give, there is no limit. Who can resist the hand of the God of heaven?

It will work, and who will reverse it? Isaiah 43:3

It will work, and bring to fulfilment, who will reverse it? Will a woman forget her baby?

Will a woman forget the baby she has borne? Even if she forgets, I will not forget you, so declares the loving, Eternal God to you. Isaiah 49:15

Even if a mother forgets the child she has borne, I will never forget you.

The God who cares for us, who protects us, who performs all things for us. O God, how great is your mercy towards us! The wondrous manner in which you preserve those who are beloved to you. The miraculous mercy of God; by which He works out what is best for us. Even though we don't realise the good now, we may come to realise it in the future; how much a wonderful God is urgently planning the best for us.

The flour in the woman's bin did not cease, nor did the oil in her jar run dry; everything was plentiful. Blessing was abundantly poured out on the country, on the house, on the son, his mother, and on the prophet who was staying as a guest with them. As you read these words now will you think for a minute. Do you want abundant blessing?

I see a scene on the mountain at Bethsaida. Jesus looked, and saw a multitude of people, crowding around. The men alone numbered five thousand, with almost an equal number of women, besides children. So many people were sitting there, on that level ground.

They listened to Jesus words eagerly, with thirst. They craved to see Him, and longed to just touch Him. Thousands yearned for this as they crowded around Him in that place. They had been with Him for three days.

Jesus instructed his disciples to provide food for them. He said, "These people have been with me for three days. If I send them empty-handed, they may faint on the way, for many of them have come from far-off places."

The disciples were bewildered. They looked at each other.

The disciple who hailed from that region was Philip, and he had the responsibility for matters concerning that region. The others looked to him for a solution.

"Did you not hear what the Lord said? He has told us to give the people food to eat." Immediately, while admitting his responsibility, Philip asked the Lord where he could buy food to feed such multitude. He voiced his helplessness; as bread worth even 200 silver coins would be insufficient to feed such a multitude. "From where can we get bread to feed a crowd of such proportion; it is better to send the multitude away."

Concern and emotion were discernible on the Lord's face as He stood there, pondering over the situation.

At that time a small boy had a small parcel which he had in his possession. The parcel probably smelt of sweat. Even so, there were five loaves of bread, and two fish in the parcel.

The boy looked at Jesus's face. Then he looked at the parcel. Would He accept this parcel? And of what use it could be in feeding such a multitude. He was doubtful.

He looked at Jesus, then at the parcel. It was then that Andrew patted him on his shoulder. Son, if you give it to Jesus, He will surely accept it.

Slowly he approached the Lord, and stood before Him. He extended the parcel out to Him. His hands were trembling as he did so. He feared as to whether the Lord would accept it. What if He asked as to what extent would this go to feed such a multitude. He hesitated as to whether he should give it or not, but Jesus extended out His hand to accept it.

There is a wonderful Master, who will stretch out His hand to accept whatever anyone wants to give. He is the Lord Jesus. Jesus stretched out His hand, and the boy gave it to Him. Jesus looked at Him, and smiled. Jesus opened the parcel. He blessed it, and broke it. He gave it to the disciples to serve it to the multitude.

The people sat down in rows on that mountain slope in Bethsaida. The twelve disciples served thousands with pieces of bread and fish, from twelve baskets. And they served again, and again.

Everyone had their fill of food. They were satisfied. They got up. Jesus was contented, and so were the disciples, and so was the little boy.

The boy returned home. In my imagination, there was a conversation going on at home. I see the mother of the boy saying, "Three days have passed since we saw our son," and the father replying, "Our son has gone to hear the word of the Lord, he will return soon, don't worry."

The mother anxiously spoke, "No, it has been three days, and I had given him just five loaves of bread and two fish; that would not have been sufficient for one meal, he must be famished by now."

"When we hear the word of the Lord, we won't experience hunger or thirst. He will return, don't worry, don't give way to fear," said the father as he tried to comfort her. Just then their son arrived ecstatic with joy, his eyes sparkling with glee, he was jumping with happiness. Joy knew no bounds.

He had returned home. His father held him close, and gave him a kiss on his head. His mother hugged him and kissed him.

Just then, there arrived twelve people bearing twelve baskets full of pieces of bread and fish. They placed the baskets down before the boy's parents. Dear friends, wouldn't that have been a wonderful scene?

Finally, Jesus arrived, Jesus blessed them. May both of you be blessed by your son. Your son has brought blessing to the region of Bethsaida, to this country, to your house and to yourselves- the parents. The reason he became a blessing is because he gave Me whatever he had.

Son, will you give whatever you have to Jesus? He will consecrate it. Let Him break you, and make you grow and flourish. Let His great name be glorified.



Chapter 8

Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious, that there was no breath left in him.

So she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?"

And he said to her, "Give me your son." 1Kings 17:17-19

The son of that woman fell sick, and was confined to bed.

He succumbed to his illness, and died. How quickly had the atmosphere in the house changed. There had been abundance and prosperity, with no dearth of food.

While the entire country was reeling under famine, with countless deaths due to starvation, there was happiness and abundance in that house. What a time of rejoicing it had been. How miraculously had things taken place!

The providence of God is astounding. A family which had God in the midst; a family that was led by God. A family that comprised of people who obeyed and loved God. Even in such a situation, disaster can occur. Nobody thought that things would go wrong so soon. The son of the woman fell ill,

and was confined to bed, there was no breath left in him. He lay ill in this manner, and later died.

Naturally the woman was plunged in grief. She approached the prophet sobbing with grief, and said, O man of God, what have I to do with you. Why had this happened?

Have you come to my house to remind me of my sin, and kill my son?

In life tragedy may occur, we may be bereaved of loved ones, and suffer the loss of parting.

At a moment we least expect, calamity may befall us. All of a sudden catastrophe may take us unawares, plunging us into a sea of problems and antagonism. Just think of what you must do in such a situation.

She ran to the prophet.

There is an eternal prophet to whom we can run to. We can rush at any time to the great priest. There is an eternal King to whom we can run to for refuge, and cry out to. He is prophet, priest and king, He is the Lord Jesus. We can run to Him at any time. We can hold on to and hug his feet. We can beseech him for our needs.

Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you, and you shall glorify My name. (Ps.50:15)

There is a God to whom we can cry out to at the face of hardships. A God to whom we can make our appeal when adversity overtakes us. When we are hard-pressed with urgent needs, there is a God to whom we can make our petition. My son, cry out to God.

If we request, He will surely not withhold it from us. If you approach Him with a petition, He will, surely, give us a reply.

Jesus Christ is the epitome of love . He is the embodiment of a sea of mercy. He is the fountain of grace, he is like vessel of blessing brimming over. He is the treasury of affection. Look, Jesus is waiting, with His hands outstretched to comfort those who approach Him. As you read this, O child of God, come to Him bearing the griefs of your heart. Come to Him with all your anxieties and grievances. Approach Him bearing all your burdens, and then lay down at His feet, every single burden. Tell Him everything openly.

öLord, there are so many problems, so many domestic troubles, financial constraints. Lord, I am sinking deep in debt, an official notice has been issued to auction my possessions. O Lord, so many years after my marriage, I have not had the fortune of having a child. All of a sudden, a most unexpected disease has overtaken me, which does not respond to treatment. O Lord, my business has collapsed, my partner has cheated me; he has misappropriated the funds, everything is lost.í

öLord, my house leaks. We are taking meals? while holding an umbrella, to avoid getting wet. At night we canít sleep, as we have to keep shifting to get a dry place in the room. I have just one room, which serves the purpose of dining room, bedroom, dressing room, guestroom and drawing room, all combined. Even the kitchen is in the same room, Lord. I have no other means, Lord.í

Child of God, call upon the living God. Tell Him, Lord I donít have means to pay rent, I just managed somehow to survive uptil now. Now I have nothing left. If I donít pay, I will be told to vacate the house. My daughter, my son, are you burdened with such problems? Are you in sorrow because you donít have a personal income. In what predicament are you in?

Whatever be it carry it, to the Lord's presence.

That woman approached Elijah and presented her petition to him, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?"

Through this event she became conscious of her past sins. Children of God, I will tell you a secret, whenever accidents, problems, opposition, adversity and grief may come into our lives, is there any aspect of your life on which the devil has claim. Is there sin lurking anywhere? Are there any corrections to be done, anywhere you need cleansing. Any area where the enemy, the Devil, the accuser is ready to brand you as guilty? In such areas, God's work in your life will be hindered.

In your life is there anything that puts shackles on God's work in your life?

Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear. Isaiah 59:1-2

My son, eliminate sin from your life, so that God will hear your prayer, and His blessings will flow to you unhindered, the barriers between you and God are eradicated.

Remove the obstructions. Get rid of your sins.

Bid goodbye to your sins. Examine your life, and search out whatever grieves the living God, and root them out one by one. Depart from your sins. Humble yourself, and receive the power of the Spirit of the Living God flowing out to you; and the shower of His blessings onto your life.

The woman approached Elijah and presented her petition to him, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you

come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?†

The poor woman thought that disaster struck because the prophet had visited her. She actually thought that the coming of the prophet had killed her son. No my children, God does not harm or bring ruin to anyone. Is not God filled with perfect love, mercy and affection? Does he not love everyone? Does he not make the rain to fall on the wicked and the righteous?

Is He not prepared to shower blessings on everyone irrespective of how they have lived? Yes, my dear ones, the living God is love.

O the love of Calvary's cross,
 The love which redeemed me,
 And embraced me to His bosom-
 The love which wipes away my tears.
 Even though my countrymen and friends get together,
 And despise and deride me,
 I then think of my beloved's face,
 Of the smile radiating from His wonderful face.†

It is the love of God that reminds me of my sin, and points out whatever corrections need to be made in my life. God's love reminds me that I need to improve a lot yet.

When the man of God came, she became conscious of her sin. When the child died, she was stricken by conscience.

That is a positive approach. She is not depressed or frustrated, nor did she grumble against God. She bore no grudge towards the prophet, or dislike towards the word of God or the children of God who propagated it. Instead she maintained a positive attitude in her heart, a good thought sprung from her heart, she remembered her sin.

When circumstances go strongly against us, let us search our life for unconfessed sin. In that manner, may you be able

to find out each and every sin. Search out your sins, and repent over them, and confess and forsake them.

He who covers up his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will receive mercy. Proverbs 28:13

If you want mercy confess, and forsake your sins. If you want prosperity, if you want to walk along a blessed life, if you want a bright future, don't cover over your sins. Confess your sins and forsake them.

If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. John 1:9

Confess your sins, and forsake them. She said that she remembered her sin. From this incident you have reminded me of my sin. Therefore let us think. What would have been her sin. Maybe this child may have been conceived after her husband's death. Was that her sin? Bible scholars are baffled by it. The word of God is silent about it. The Holy Spirit has left it to be a subject of contemplation for each of us. Dear ones, there is no harm in thinking that way. When the son died, the mother was reminded of her sin. May be he was a son born out of wedlock. That fact cropped up in her memory now. For so long prosperity had pervaded.

Why was it that God had showered abundance on a home tainted with sin? Where there was much of sin? grace was abundant. Child of God, even when sins are many in your life, God do not forsake you but continues to love you. Find out whatever are the sins in your life. Repent with a guilty conscience. Cry for the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit who makes us conscious of our sins and transgressions. Pray to God. Start a new life. Let God's name be glorified forever.



Chapter 9

And he took him out of her arms, and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed.

Then he cried out to the Lord saying, 'Why have you brought tragedy on this widow, with whom I lodge, by killing her son?'

Then he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the Lord saying O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him.

Then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. 1Kings17: 19-22

After a big blessing, came a big disaster. In Elijah's life he spoke words of blessing when he went and presented himself to Ahab. However later he underwent the trial of Cherith drying up. That was actually a test for Elijah. But Elijah did not falter even then. He was not anxious about how he would find water to drink. He passed through the test successfully.

God's great blessings are usually followed by great testings.

In such a manner did great blessing visit the widow's house. What is great blessing? The flour in the pot did not cease, the oil in the jar did not run dry. They were able to have food in abundance not only for themselves, but also to give to others. Great blessing indeed. But great blessing was followed by great testings- it was a fiery ordeal; a severe trial. The child became ill and died. She brought the dead body to the prophet she laid the child on her lap, and pleaded with the prophet.

“What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?” The prophet replied, “Give me your son.” He meant “Give your problem into my hand.” The problem of a child of God, who prays to the living God, will be taken up by God's own hands.

“Commit thy way to God, He will sustain thee.” (Ps. 37:3)

Put your trust in Him only, and don't rely on your own wisdom or ability. He will act on your behalf.

Dear child of God, put your problems into the hands of the living God. Your struggles, your mental anguish, torment that you are undergoing, the heartaches, griefs, grievances in your life; trials bring everything truthfully to the living God, open up your heart to Him.

The Bible tells us about a woman in the first book of Samuel. She was Hannah. She was steeped in sorrow, she lived in pain and mental anguish. She had no children. What added to her sorrow was the continuous taunting of her companion Peninnah. I have children, why is it that you have none? It shows what kind of heart you have, and the quality of the life you have led. You have the reputation of being a woman of prayer and piety, then how is it that you are not able to bear

children? You should have a clean heart, if you want to bear a child. In this manner Penninah relentlessly scoffed, insulted and humiliated Hannah on this issue, and it pierced Hannah to the heart. She lived in much agony.

She went to the house of God in much sorrow, sobbing with grief. She did not enter inside the temple. How can I being a woman in intense anguish enter inside? She stood at the door. She burst out crying, whimpering and tried to suppress her sobs.

The high priest Eli was seated inside the temple. She did not notice him, but continued to cry thinking of her sorrows, oblivious of everything around her.

A life filled with sadness, a barren woman, who had no children. Her barrenness drove her to depression and despair. The words of Penninah, her sister hurt deeply. She sobbed, venting her sorrow. As she tried to smother her sobs, her prayer emerged as incoherent words from her lips. She tried to hold her lips tight. Even so occasional sighing, whimpering, and moaning escaped as stifled sounds. Her lips moved uncontrollably, her body shivered, and garbled sounds could be heard.

The high priest Eli presumed that she was drunk with much wine, delirious, and that her intoxication made her react in this manner. The high priest called her and said, 'How long will you stand here intoxicated with wine. Let your drunkenness, and high spirits wear off. When you are sober, then come and pray. How dare you come to the house of God in such an inebriated condition?' He spoke to her very harshly.

She was startled. She looked at Eli who was seated at a distance; as he spoke harsh and serious words.

She replied, "No my Lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit, I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord." She managed to say this amidst sobs and sighs.

Dearly beloved, pour out the anguish in your life, open up your heart to Him, the aches in your heart; reveal to Him your griefs. Disclose the agonizing issues in your life to Him.

"O my Lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit, I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord."

Child of God, tell God as Hanna did. O God, I am a woman in intense anguish, Lord, I am a man in intense anguish. O my God, I am a child of God in intense mental agony. Have mercy on me. Lord, I speak to you out of the excessive grief that I bear in my heart.

The miraculous grace of the Lord will then pervade. The misconception of the High priest Eli was removed. People of God, do others misunderstand you? Are they priests or authorities of the church? Their misconceptions will be removed. They will also come to understand the truth. Then glory will come to God's name.

Hanna's face was no longer downcast. God had removed the dejection from her face. Dear child of God, God is not only able to remove the dejection on your face, but also the depression in your heart. Son, cry out to Him.

The dead body of the child was brought to Elijah. She was sobbing in grief as she supported the dead child on her lap. Elijah said to her, "Give your son to me." There is someone who is willing to solve your problem. There is someone willing to take up your issues of agony, pain, the issues that have made you downcast, the anguish in your heart, your whimpers and sighs; everything.

There is a God who stores up your tears in a vessel. Son, reveal your distress to God, Daughter tell God about your disappointments. Child of God, tell God about the depression, frustrations, and the agonizing experiences in a life filled with gloominess. Look, He stands here, willing to take these issues on your behalf.

Give your son to me. *He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.*

Let us give ourselves into God's hands. The One who died on the cross for us; to bear our pain, and our agony. *Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.*

The One who took up the cross, is here standing beside you to carry the heavy burdens from our shoulders.

Just observe Him. His face is swollen. His head bears a crown of thorns. The blood that spurted out when they hammered the thorny crown onto His head, is flowing down to his eyes. He has borne countless slaps on his cheeks. There are traces of spit on His face, which is mixed with sweat and blood and is flowing downwards.

My Son, just picture Him. He bears our griefs. They scourged Him with a barbed whip. His back is bleeding profusely from His stripes, like springs of water. His skin is cracking with dehydration all over. His body is blistering all over from the hot sun. He lies on the cross in great agony. His feet and hands were shattered when iron nails were hammered onto them, pinning Him to the cross.

Blood and water is welling up from where they pierced his side. Coupled with the intense heat, the heavier parts of His body are sagging, as only the extremities are bound to the cross. This makes breathing difficult. In great agony, he gasps

for breath desperately; the loud gasps can be heard from afar.

Dear child of God, death on the cross occurs in actuality not due to the wounds on the extremities; but due to dearth of life breath, for which there is a desperate cry. He passes through this terrible ordeal of excruciating, desperate thirst for air that gradually culminates in death. The lack of life-giving air or oxygen is the cause of death. The sagging frame of the body, nailed to the cross, makes every breath agonizing, and he gasps desperately.

Child of God, just picture that terrible experience in your mind's eye. Give Him all your burdens, tell him all your life's problems, and open your heart to Him. Jesus, I am

your slave. Jesus, you bore my griefs. Therefore I am your servant, your possession. I crucify myself to the Cross. Lord, just as how you resurrected, I too will resurrect, and live a life as a new creation. From today I am yours. Let the name of the Lord be praised.



Chapter 10

And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!"

Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is the truth."
1Kings 17:23-24

You are a man of God, and the word of the Lord in your mouth is the truth. Elijah prayed. God heard Elijah's prayer. We see this in the fifth chapter of the book of James. "Elijah was a man with a nature like us."

The man with a nature like ours, was a man of great prayer.

This is what we read. "The fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." (Proverbs 15:29; James 5:16) Elijah was a man with a nature like ours. He prayed that it would not rain, and it did not rain for three years and six months. On praying again, rain fell from the sky. Grain sprouted from the earth. He was a prayer warrior. He was a blessed man of God, who had interceded with God on several issues that needed prayer, and obtained replies from the same from God.

The son of the widow died. Elijah carried the dead body of the boy to the upper room where he was staying. There he laid the child on his bed. Elijah prayed for the child. The prayer of the man of God reached at the throne of God's grace.

Our spiritual forefathers, the saints of old generation prayed that their prayer may reach the doors of the heavenly Jerusalem, to the throne of God. O Lord, I pray that likewise my prayer will reach the doors of the heavenly Jerusalem, to the throne of the glorious God.

The saints who prayed that their prayers would reach the throne of God, beyond the doors of the heavenly Jerusalem, realized that all prayers did not reach God. They understood that all prayers were confined to earthly limits, and failed to ascend to the throne of God.

If we nurture sin in our life, our prayer will not reach the throne of God, it will not ascend to His presence. If we do not forsake sin our prayers will remain as mere lip movements. We will just go through a routine of pronouncing a few words.

The prophet Isaiah wrote: "These people honour Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me." They approach God to honour Him with their lips. They honour God by uttering words of prayer and worship with their lips. They chant out the prescribed prayers mechanically. It is just an exercise of the lips. But if prayer has to spring up from the depth of the heart, the heart should be clean and free from sin. There should be any trace of sin in the heart. The thoughts, words, deeds, and attitudes should be absolutely free from sin. Dear friends, there should be no tendencies towards sin in our blood, in our nature, no sinful thoughts and desires reigning in our brains; our hearts should be free from the motivation of sin.

Sin devastates man, destroys him. Sin prevents man from getting close to God. It creates a great wall between God and man. When you pray after putting away sin, then God will hear your prayer. David said, "If I had regarded iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have heard me."

Child of God, is there any sin in your heart, is there evil within? Know that the Lord will not hear your prayers. If your prayer is to be heard, if it has to reach God's presence, be reconciled to God.

Whatever sins are a barrier to your reconciliation with God, Son you must remove them. Daughter, cast your sins away from your heart. Then you can come close to God and He will hear your prayer. Your prayer will reach God's presence.

God heard Elijah's prayer. What a miracle, the boy was restored to life! There is a God who makes life alive and active. There is a God who heard the prayer of the prophet and restored the dead boy to life. Dear friends, God in heaven is willing to grant life.

The one who brought Jairus's dead daughter to life, is willing even today to infuse you with life. The One who brought the widow's son to life by touching the coffin, is standing beside us. The dead body of Lazarus that had been buried four days and was decomposed, decayed and a stench had begun to develop, was brought to life such that he walked and dined with the Lord. There is such an omnipotent God and Lord who is willing to do this! Just see this God. And submit yourself to Him. He is a living God. The boy received life. The prophet Elijah returned the child back to his mother alive. He had received a dead boy. Whoever touched Him, and whomever He touched, all received healing. He wipes and touches too.

Then there will be healing and life. Whoever of those who read these words now is dead in the spirit? Whoever has the

wages of sin, which is death, reigning in them; those who are dead in spirit because of sin. Are any such people reading these words now?

Son, daughter, Christ has come to grant you life. God has come to give you abundant life. Therefore bid farewell to your sin right now, and make a promise to God that henceforth you will lead a life as a new creation.

Jesus, I believe that you died on the cross in order to bear the punishment for my sins on my behalf. Therefore hereafter I promise to lead a life free from sin. Then the nail-pierced hands of Christ will rest on your head. It will revive your dead spirit. The wages of sin is death, but God is standing here to give you life-giving grace.

The boy received life. The prophet Elijah returned the child back to his mother alive. He had received a dead boy. He returned a child who was vibrant with life, energetic, smiling, and sweet. Dear child of God, when you had begun to read these words today, your spirit may have been dead. But now if you accept Jesus as your Master, Saviour and Lord into your heart, then your spirit will be revived. As you read these words, you can also acquire new life and resurrect.

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Psalm 150:6

Let your heart resound with praise which is a symbol of life. Then your hearts will celebrate the joy of salvation. Boundless joy will bubble forth and overflow from the depths of your hearts. Shouts of joy and happy sounds of praise-echoes will reverberate loudly in your hearts.

Dear child of God, Jesus has come to you to grant you life.

That child received life. The mother gave Elijah a dead child. Now she received from Elijah's arms a living, sweet child. Dear child of God, no one has sought God's presence and returned disappointed. There is no one in the history of the world in the past twenty centuries, who has approached God after forsaking sin, and pledging never to be consciously involved in sin; and has returned without receiving a blessing.

Dear child of God, just believe and submit all the burdens of your heart to God. Tell him about whatever has affected your soul, any accidents in which you have succumbed to sin. Commence a new life untainted by sin.

Then God will send comfort, peace, and blessing. The God of Heaven has come down to bless you.

Elijah returned son to his mother. All of a sudden, the woman overwhelmed with gratitude, and with joy filling her heart, exclaimed thus: "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of God in your mouth is the truth."

For the past three years the prophet Elijah had resided in the woman's house. He had maintained a holy life, even though the woman had a history of a degenerate past. He demonstrated how the word of God, which he spoke could be applied to practical life.

He practised what he preached. People of God, servants and ministers of God, are you reading these words? Do you live in accordance with what you preach?

I who writes these words, submit my life at Christ's feet, and examine myself with fear and trembling. Am I living in accordance with what I preach? If not, the loss is mine.

I will suffer great loss, irretrievable loss. My son, you take the word of God on your lips and instruct people, and you teach them. Even as you read these words, do you teach yourself?

The apostle Paul wrote thus to the church at Rome:

Indeed you are called a Jew and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in the darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of the babes, having the form of the knowledge of the truth in the law.

You, therefore who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, 'Do not commit adultery', do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through the breaking of the law? For, 'The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,' as it is written.

Romans 2:17-21

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; nor is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not from men, but from God.

Romans 2:28-29

People of God, examine yourself earnestly. Elijah received a verbal certificate of appreciation for having led a holy life, from the mouth of a woman who had led a corrupt life in the past.

She said this after having observed him for three years, during which she had lodged him in her house in secret. 'I perceive that you are a godly man. I understand that the word of God in your mouth is truth indeed.'

Would you like someone to testify about you likewise? Do you want your life to bear a good witness to God? Humble yourself right now then, meditate for a moment. "Lord I lived till now without knowing You. I carried out your ministry without recognizing you. Lord, without experiencing holiness in my life, I preached the word of holiness. With my lips I pronounced Your word, and worshipped. And all the time my heart was far away from You. Forgive and pardon me Lord. From today on, I decide to lead a new life. Please bless me."



Chapter 11

Now it came to pass that after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the third year saying, 'Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth.'

1Kings 18:1,2

Samaria was sweltering as there had been no rainfall in the past three years; and as a consequence severe famine had ravaged the country.

The people were in great distress. There was no rain, and the earth was parched. Like a hot desert, the entire country was reeling under severe drought.

The famine in the days of Elijah had shocked the country, and the people were in the grip of a dire crisis. The earth was so parched that not even a blade of green grass was visible. The people were suffering from starvation. There was no means of obtaining food. Severe famine prevailed.

Even today severe starvation is evident in our society. I hint on not just the famine of food. Definitely, scarcity of food is a problem for many. There are many poor people who have

no access to nutritious food. It is true that even today there are many who experience scarcity of food. They are unemployed, with no income. They have no means to live on. There is no hope for the future. There is a host of people who languish in despair, as they see no means of relief to their predicament.

We encounter such people all over the world in various regions, nations and societies.

However that is not the only form of hunger. There is a hunger for love today. Love is not given nor is it received. To love and to be loved is a basic requirement for a human being. It is an essential phenomenon in man's life. To love, and to be loved. There should be someone for me to love. There should be someone who loves me.

However today there is dearth of love, a definite scarcity or paucity. Love is not received. Children long for their father's love, or mother's love. Wives desire love from their husbands. Husbands earnestly seek love from their wives. Parents crave a little mercy, pity and compassion from their children.

Dear friend are you experiencing an intense thirst for love? Are you in despair because of the intense famine of love. Among the myriad of problems that a man has to face in life, the shortage of money is a major one. A financial crisis. The situation is that of increasing debt, and no income to repay it. There are no means to pay rent. The owners threaten to forcibly vacate their premises. Life is plunged into the depths of despair. The mind is in constant turmoil, and lacks peace. Scarcity of peace. This may be due to several reasons. There may be discord within the family, a lack of unity and harmony. There is difference of opinion; a diversity in outlook and

attitude. There is dislike, annoyance, protest, grumbling, and complaining of various kinds. Some fan into flame as outbursts of anger. Some continue to sting like smoke emitted from embers of coals. There are many who suffer from lack of peace in their lives. There are people who suffer from shortage of unity. There are those who lack not just finances, but also love.

There are those who lack good clothing. Those who long to have good attire to wear to a friend's wedding, to wear a good saree like other people do, but can't afford to buy one.

A woman once confessed to me that she had spoken a lie to her husband. When I asked what it was, she replied, "Sir, I told him that I was not feeling well. I was supposed to go to a sister's house for a wedding. There all the guests would come dressed elegantly in costly sarees. I didn't have a presentable saree. I just have the cheap sarees that I wear at home; which I felt ashamed to wear it to a wedding, where others would be smartly dressed. So I lied to my husband that I was not well. "Please go to the wedding alone." "Sir, I convinced my poor husband that I was ill." He went alone.

Hunger for clothing.

Dear friends, what is the famine in your life? At that time in Samaria there was famine. In the time of the prophet Elijah there was famine because there was no rain. Even today when the spiritual showers do not fall the society experiences intense spiritual famine.

There are churches, basilicas, chapels, priests, bishops, pastors, ministers and ministries, conventions and poor homes. There are varied forms of pomp and show on the

exterior in festivals, feasts, rituals and practices in churches.

But spirituality is sorely lacking, people with Christ-like attitude are scarce, there is a shortage of saints and the faithful. Holy people with devotion to God are dwindling in number.

David prayed thus with deep sighs of sorrow: *Help Lord for the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.* Psalm 12:1

Dear friends, you can help alleviate the famine in society by being a saint of Christ, an ambassador of revival. Dear people of God, are you willing to leap to the forefront of revival? Are you interested? You can become a soldier of Christ. You can become His saint. You can abandon your former life and bid farewell to your old nature, and commence a new life. Then Christ will be able to abide in you and use you to work great miracles.

Christ can use one of you to direct heavenly showers and quench the drought in the spirit that has afflicted the society. At that time God stood in the prophet Elijah and made rain to fall in Samaria.

Elijah was a man with a nature just like ours. If God used Elijah who had a nature like ours, to make rain to fall, he can also use each of us to shower spiritual blessings on the society that is parched in the spirit. God is willing to alleviate in this manner the spiritual calamities, damage, famine and hunger. This is God's desire.

Are you willing to stand for His purpose to be fulfilled? Are you interested to lead a holy life, as did Elijah. We have read and contemplated over what the widow of Zarephath told Elijah

in the last verse of the seventeenth chapter.

ÿI perceive that you are a godly man. I know now that the word of God in your mouth is truth indeed.ÿ

You are a man of God. I understand that the word of God in your mouth is truth indeed. This is what the widow told the prophet Elijah. She told this to the prophet who had resided in secret in her house for three years. You are a man of God. I know now that the word of God in your mouth is truth indeed.

Dear friends, if your life is a holy witness, and year you a true testimony of the love of the Cross, then the Lord will use you to alleviate spiritual dryness. Then He will eliminate all misfortunes that have befallen your family, as well as the spiritual famine of the society. The new light of spiritual revival will radiate out, new peace and serenity will permeate out, and God will lift you, child of God to great spiritual heights. Do you want this great privilege? Just like what was said about the prophet Elijah, in later years a woman from Shunem said about Elisha. ÿYou are a man of God. I can see that you are a holy man and that the spirit of God is on you.ÿ

ÿI can perceive he is a holy man of Godÿ, was what the Shunammite woman said.

ÿLook now, I can see that this is a holy man of God who passes by us regularly.ÿ The woman who spoke thus about Elisha to her husband had only seen him pass by regularly; she had not heard him speak.

She had not heard him speak. Without hearing him talk, she said: ÿLook now, I can see that this is a holy man of God who passes by us regularly.ÿ

Dear friends, let us become ambassadors of peace, let us stand at the forefront of the wave of revival. Let us give ourselves to Christ's hands to contribute to the spiritual revival. Now, let us pray and surrender ourselves to Christ.

Lord, let me be a holy child of God, in whom you can descend, stand and work. For this purpose I submit myself at the foot of the Cross. Wash me with the precious blood that you have shed on the cross. Make me holy. From today on, I submit myself to you to let me be your witness bearing testimony to holiness and godly love. Have mercy on me, and bless me.



Chapter 12

Now it came to pass that after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah saying, Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth.†

†Go, show yourself to Ahab, the subject of the seventeenth chapter of the first book of kings is †Hide yourself. But in the eighteenth chapter the subject is to †Show yourself.

After concealing himself for three years, Elijah now emerges for public ministry. In the time he remained hidden he proved the holiness of his secret life. Now he was ready for public ministry.

In life if you are not able to maintain holiness in your secret and personal life, then carrying out God's work would be a mistake and useless, and even dangerous as it would invite a curse into your life; besides grieving God. In the time that he remained hidden in secret, he proved perfectly well by his life that he was a holy man of God.

A man of God filled with Spirit of God.

A man of God untainted by sin. A man of God, who had no association with evil.

If you need to be a useful weapon in the hands of God for public ministry, then your secret life should be holy. God in heaven can see the secret aspects of your life; that are not visible to others. He knows all about you that others don't. King David realised this fact well.

He said thus in the hundred and thirty ninth psalm.

öO Lord, You have searched me, and know me. You know my sitting down, and my rising up. You understand my thought from afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold O Lord, You know it altogether. It is high, I cannot attain it. Where can I go from your Spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend into heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold you are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day, the darkness and light are both alike to you.í Psalm 139:1-12

öO Lord, you have searched me and you know me.í The living God searches our hearts, he examines and weighs us everyday. There is no creation that is hidden from His sight.

In the thirteenth verse of the fourth chapter of the book of Hebrews he says:

öAnd there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him, to whom we must give account.í

And all the churches shall know that I am the God who searches the minds and the hearts. Rev 2:23

It is not possible to hide from God, the One who judges thoughts, emotions and motives. Elijah's secret and personal life was pleasing to God.

The holy man Elijah lived such that the God would see all that is done in secret would be pleased. Three years had passed. During that time span, he proved his holiness by leading an exemplary personal life. During the time he remained hidden, he gained worth as a holy man of God.

Thus it was after three years in which he had proved his holiness in his private life, that a new Elijah emerged, seeking to present himself to Ahab.

God said: *Go, and present yourself to Ahab.*

Elijah entered public ministry on presenting himself before Ahab. Before this he had undergone a secret training. He was tested. So he received both training and testing in secret.

First- a secret training

Second- a secret testing

After this he was ready for a public ministry. It is at this juncture that God asked him to confront the wicked king Ahab.

Child of God, if you want to confront the evil one, the devil, your life should be holy. You have to prove yourself to be a saint in your private life. When God who reads the hearts of men, sees that you are holy, blesses you gladly out of his love, fondness. Then that you will be able to battle the devil.

We cannot battle the devil in the flesh because in the sixth chapter of the book of Ephesians, the apostle says that:

Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not

wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.†
Ephesians 6:10-12

To face the terrible evil spirits, it is essential that we have holiness in our possession.

To battle the evil spirits we require the tender touch of the sacred hand of the Holy One. We need the filling of the miraculous love of the Cross of the Great and Holy God.

When the experience of the cross; the love and sacrifice of the cross becomes a living reality, then it is possible to overcome the forces of evil. By making the sign of the cross, or wearing a chain with a cross, or hanging a cross in your house will not scare the evil one.

Son, Daughter, the cross should establish itself in your heart. It is when the old man in you dies, and the new man comes to life, that you will be equipped to overcome the devil.

To battle and defeat the hosts of Satan, it is important that we take possession of the victory gained for us by the cross. The victory that the Lord Jesus won for us on the cross, that heavenly grace, the miraculous strength of the glowing sacrifice prompted by heavenly love, if that illumines your life, then you will be able to defeat the evil one.

If we say, I rebuke Satan in Jesus name†, he will not go away. If the name of Jesus has to be placed as a seal on your heart, then the cross has to be established there. There the old man has to die, and the new man has to come to life.

There are people who say that they bind Satan in Jesus' name. There are those who say I command Satan in Jesus' name.† But those are meaningless and vain words. If the authority of the Holy Spirit has to take charge, then the glowing

sacrificial love of the cross of Christ has to set your heart on fire. The fire of the Holy Spirit must burn in your heart. That is what Elijah received.

Elijah went to confront Ahab in the fire of the Holy Spirit. Observe the patient perseverance of three years. How patiently he waited for three long years. Before delivering a single message, his first message, he remained in secret for three years. Before he revealed himself to Ahab and spoke a few words to him, before he entered into public ministry, before he revealed himself to the people on the mountain peak of Carmel, and stood up open to public scrutiny he waited three years.

My son, if you continue to live as an ordinary man as you do today, your public ministry will not bear fruit. You may witness the Lord; good! You may preach His word; good! But know one thing- you must patiently wait for power from above. You must patiently wait, and take holiness into possession. You must patiently wait, and make the cross your personal experience. You must patiently wait, and become an ambassador of holiness.

Then when you publicly reveal yourself, the fire of the Lord will descend. In your public appearance amongst sceptical people, idol worshippers and people who oppose you, fire from heaven will descend, acknowledging you and hearing your prayer.

Are you willing to be useful in the hands of the living God? If so, then submit yourself right now. Lord, the strength I possess now is not enough, the gifts of the Holy Spirit that I have are insufficient, the spiritual vision and environment, the spiritual background and attitudes ñall are lacking, sadly lacking. Therefore Lord, grant the Holy Spirit, the Spirit in double measures, let tenfold of the Holy Spirit, the fire of the

Holy Spirit, flow through my nerves and vessels, let the grace of the Holy Spirit flow through me, let the power of the Holy spirit permeate through me, descend on my head, and penetrate into my brain, and perfuse through my nervous system purifying it. Let every cell in my body be filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Transform me into a holy servant of mighty use to You.

Be delighted with me. Let Your Holy Spirit be glorified through me.

Here I am Lord, I humble myself now and submit myself into your hands. Make me worthy of your glorious public ministry. Transform me into a child of God having the power of the Holy Spirit like Elijah. Lord, have mercy on me.



Chapter 13

Now it came to pass that after many days the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, "Go present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth." So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab, and there was a severe famine in Samaria.

1Kings18: 1,2

Elijah went to present himself to Ahab. The man of God Elijah, was God's Elijah. The living God was Elijah's God. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours. Elijah went to present himself to King Ahab.

Ahab was a unbeliever king. He was a king who denied God. He was the husband of the wicked woman Queen Jezebel. Ahab was an idol worshipper. Ahab was an unbeliever king who was devoted to Baal idols and Asherah poles and worshipped them.

Ahab was a wicked king who reviled God, and abandoned God. He was an evil man who denied God, and remained at the beck and call of his wife Jezebel. He was a wicked king who encouraged idol worshippers and promoted the worship of Baal.

Elijah went to meet King Ahab. God sent Elijah to meet him.

Before this he was instructed by God to hide by the brook Cherith. From there he was sent to the house of the widow of Zarephath. The brook Cherith, and the thicket beside it which enabled Elijah to hide, the crow, by means of which food consisting of bread and meat was provided, and the widow of Zarephath who fed and sheltered the Holy man of God- all were God's provisions.

However Elijah did not linger to focus on the gifts, but was intent on seeking the Giver. Who has given me all these gifts? Elijah looked back and pondered.

There is a God who was pleased to let me hide and find shelter by the brook Cherith; to let me drink of its water, and assign a crow to provide me with bread. The crow, the bread and Cherith all were God's gifts. The widow of Zarephath was also God's gift. God who loves me has provided the circumstances, He has graciously granted gifts, all that I have are His gifts; solely gifts.

Even so, when the time came for Elijah to depart from the house of the widow, he did not hesitate. True, God had provided for him there. It was a gift, but he did not linger and be content with it. Beyond the gift there is a giver. He knew that this widow had been assigned by God. There is a true God who was willing to arrange for bread and meat to be carried to him by a crow.

People of God, do not rely on gifts. Seek the Giver. When you see the gifts, do not depend on them and become conceited. Don't put your trust in them. Don't take pride in them. See the Giver, do not forget the Hand which gave it to you. David did not forget.

David said thus in the hundred and sixteenth psalm:

What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits towards me? I will take up my cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.† Ps.116: 12-13

The pains of death encompassed me, and the pangs of Sheol laid hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then I called on the name of the Lord, O Lord, I implore You, deliver my soul,† Ps.116:3-4

David is praising God thinking of the benefits that God has granted to him.

He sang thus in the hundred and thirty-sixth psalm:

Who remembered us in our lowly state, for His mercy endures forever, and rescued us from our enemies, for His mercy endures forever;†

Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name, bless the Lord O my soul and forget not all His benefits, He forgives all my sins, and heals all my diseases., who redeems your life from destruction,† Ps.103:1-4

As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities His children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him.† Ps.103: 12-13

For as high as the heavens are above the earth so great is His mercy towards those who fear Him;† Ps. 103:11

David is praising God reflecting on all His gifts.

Child of God, God has given you many gifts. He has arranged certain circumstances in your favour. Your body is healthy. Your eyes have vision. When many people of your age have passed away to eternal destruction, God has lengthened your lifespan. When some have been injured in

an accident, you escaped unscathed. God protected you. He blessed you. He has given; the clothes you wear are what God gave, the place you sleep, your husband or wife, all are from God. God gave you children, who are healthy, intelligent, and of good character; all are His gifts.

Child of God, He has given you a source of income, and means to live on and a comfortable background. He gave you a heart to love God, He inspired you with a desire to hear the word of God, he gave you the grace to make the Word of God sweet; He instilled in you an ardent desire and thirst for the word of God.

Son, He gave you repentance. Everything is a gift from God, everything is grace, solely grace. Christ, the fountain of grace, has showered you with all grace.

Elijah did not rely on the gifts. He did not dwell on them. He went forward. He obeyed wholeheartedly the command of the Giver.

God commanded him to present himself to Ahab. Elijah set forth.

At each point of time, whenever he received a new instruction, we see the man of God going forward according to God's will.

Whenever God commanded, he obeyed.

There is no room for doubt or questioning. He had no apprehension on how he would survive. He did not raise the question of his fate, when the waters of the brook Cherith, where he was hidden, would run dry.

When he thought he was ready for ministry, he was told to remain hidden, but he did not question God, nor did he doubt Him. He bore everything with humility.

In the Acts of the Apostles, we see that whenever the apostles set out for any ministry they humbled themselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and worked accordingly.

We read thus in the sixth verse of the sixteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go to Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

The apostle Paul wanted to preach the word of God in Asia. Therefore he wanted to go to Asia, but the Holy Spirit forbid him. Thereafter he tried to go to Bithynia. The Spirit of Christ did not permit him. Where should he go as a witness of God? The word of God was to preach the word to the ends of the earth.

Be my witnesses to the ends of the earth, is what the word of God says. Is it not in accordance with that word that they desired to go to Asia to preach and tried to go to Bithynia? But God did not permit them. God has a time for everything. God has a definite time, and period for everything. It is characteristic of a child of God to move in keeping with God's schedule.

That is the secret of blessing for a child of God.

Humble yourself before the Spirit of God. In the very place Asia, to which the apostle Paul had desired to go, but was forbidden; later the Spirit of God arranged an opportunity for him to stay there for three years. God prepared him to preach the word of God to the people of God in Asia, and teach in the school of Tyrinus there. God will conduct His ministry in His time.

God's work is not to be done at our time schedule, nor in the manner that we think. It is not according to our notions, plans, personal likes or vested interests. God's work is to be done in tune with the leading of the Holy Spirit.

He will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go, I will guide you with my eye. Psalm 32:8

We should carry out God's ministry according to instruction given by the Spirit of God. Elijah was like that.

He will guide me with your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

So said David in the seventy-third psalm.

God's grace is His leading and dealing. Are you willing to yield to God's leadership? God commanded the man of God, Elijah. He obeyed the command. He did not have any personal scheme. He did not own a distinct ministry, spirituality or spiritual gifts, or spiritual zeal. Everything was humbled before God.

Son, do you want to be of use in the God's hands? Humble yourself before Him. Surrender to His leading. Do what God wishes, and go forward. Hudson Taylor was God's servant for the Inland Mission in China. He worked according to God's will. C.T. Studd too carried out a ministry in keeping with God's will. Initially he worked in the Chinese Inland Mission, and later he went to Africa for ministry there. Everything was done in obedience to God's guidance.

David Livingstone traversed the dense forests of Africa, and led many Negroes and tribals to Christ. Everything was according to God's will. Since time immemorial every man of

God has experienced the divine leading. They ministered in obedience to God's guidance.

We should also obtain God's leading. "When you turn to the right or left, this is the way. Walk through this way, you will hear a voice behind you saying this, as we read in the book of the prophet Isaiah, chapter thirty, in the twentieth and twenty-second verses. Likewise we should yield ourselves to God's leading, not turning to the right or left, nor sway or bend, not getting restless, but courageously stride ahead in God's way in our journey.

Let us submit ourselves to God for His grace. Lord, from today onwards I will be your faithful servant.

Lord, let your grace come upon me, please bless me. Let us pray, may God bless us.



Chapter 14

And Ahab had called Obadiah, who was in charge of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly. For so it was, while Jezebel massacred the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets of the Lord and hidden them, fifty to a cave and had fed them with bread and water.)

And Ahab had said to Obadiah, "Go into the land, and to all the springs of water and to all the brooks; perhaps we may find grass to keep the horses and mules alive, so that we will not have to kill any livestock."

So they divided the land between them in order to explore it, Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way by himself. 1Kings 18:3-6

Here we see a devotee of God. His name was Obadiah. He was in charge of Ahab's house. Obadiah was his servant. However he feared the Lord greatly. He was the Lord's devotee in secret, and Ahab's servant, in public.

People of God, take note. Though he was a secret devotee of God, he was a servant of a Baal idol worshipper and one

who opposed God. Obadiah served Ahab. Even so, he served the living God.

In the first book of Kings, chapter seventeen, we see Elijah saying, "As surely as the Lord lives before whom I stand". Elijah served God, and Obadiah served Ahab, he was in charge of his house.

Both are devotees of the Lord. Elijah was God's devotee and a man of God, Obadiah too was a devotee of the Lord. But there is a difference. A devotee of the Lord in secret; but a servant of the enemy of the Lord in public.

Ahab's servant Obadiah represents many believers of today. They worship God in secret, they believe God exists, they desire to go forward with God, they love the children of God and seek to help them; they encourage God's ministry. But in certain parts of their life they do not allow God to enter. They do not maintain a godly attitude, nor do they think in a godly manner, they are not people after God's own heart.

Therefore God is not able to use them for His purpose. Ahab opposed God, worshipped idols and led the people of God astray; he was a terrible and wicked king. In serving such a king, even if Obadiah was a believer of God in secret, he would not be able to proceed unhindered along the path of devotion. He would not be able to do great things for God.

Ahab's servant Obadiah was indeed a devotee of God. As we read we understand that though he served Ahab, he desired to serve God.

The prophet Elijah was outside the camp, but Obadiah was inside the court. Obadiah resided in the king's palace, in his official residence. Elijah however never crossed inside the camp. The prophet Elijah knew God's desire. Obadiah did not think of seeking God's will. Obadiah was not interested

in fulfilling God's will. While the prophet Elijah cared for the people of God, and the nation, and laboured for their salvation, Obadiah ventured out to pluck grass and find fodder for the donkeys and horses.

Obadiah's service was to rescue donkeys, camels and horses. The ministry of the prophet Elijah was to rescue the people of God, the nation; to save the nation from the terrible clutches of idol worship was the object of his toil.

Whereas the efforts of Obadiah were directed towards gathering feed for the donkeys and camels. He ventured out for this purpose.

God's servants are of different types. Though they pretend to be sincere devotees, deep down hidden in their nature, even today, they are in bondage to the Devil. They are in effect servants of Satan. But they make public appearances as servants of God, preaching in pulpits. But in their lives they do not gain any genuine spiritual fervour, zeal, power, might or quality.

The zeal and fire of devotion of the Holy Spirit does not lead them, nor control them

Obadiah was indeed a believer. He had certain plus points. The Lord God is a God who highlights our good qualities. He commends the good he sees in us. We read that when Jezebel was killing all God's prophets, Obadiah had taken a hundred prophets, and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and supplied them with bread and water, rescuing them.

He gave them food and water, and thus protected them.

He loved the children of God. He loved God's work. But he was afraid to do it openly: 'What would people say, what would Ahab think, what would the authorities think'.

If I engage in public ministry will it undermine my position, status in society, worth, and esteem?

Today many fear to do public ministry, and hesitate as they are doubtful of the consequences.

They know what is said is the truth, and what they hear is the absolute truth, but they are not willing to take the risk of becoming its emissaries. They are not willing to make a glorious stand and become useful weapons in the hands of the Living Christ to serve the truth. They want to safeguard certain worldly interests.

They crave favour from men, their respect, applause from individuals for their notable achievements. Therefore they are unwilling to bear the reproach of Christ.

They are not willing to sacrifice anything dear to them. Evangelists who are not willing to take risks. They are not willing to take risks, but they want to follow the tide. They want to stick to the world, and the times having a makeshift spirituality and don a mask of individuality and go ahead. But they are not willing to bear reproach for Christ. They are not willing to endure persecution for Christ. They are not willing to count everything as loss for the sake of Christ.

The Apostle Paul clearly witnesses his experience in the epistle to the Phillipians. What does he say? There were many things in which he could have confidence in, as the apostle says; but he counted them as rubbish. He counted them as loss.

But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for the sake of Christ. Phil. 3-7

The apostle clearly states that there were many things which he could have counted as gain. What all could he have

taken pride in? There were several issues in which he could have taken pride in, is what the apostle says.

iCircumcised the eight day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for the sake of Christ. But indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ, Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things.† Phil. 3: 5-8

There were matters in which he could have taken confidence in. In the Jewish community he was recognised as a Pharisee. A disciple of the renowned teacher Gamaliel, concerning knowledge of the Scriptures he was a great scholar.

He was a veritable master of the Scriptures. Regarding the righteousness from the law, he was blameless, and unsurpassed. He was born in the lineage of the tribe of Benjamin, and a good Pharisee. Circumcised the eight day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He was a commendable man in all respects.

In those times, a Roman citizenship by birth was considered to be of great worth and prestige in society and in the nation and assured status, name and fame to its holder. But the apostle was willing to consider all this as rubbish. Why?

Through the knowledge that came from knowing Christ, he counted himself ia fool for Christís sake.†

iA fool for Christís sake.†

Dear friends, are you willing to become fools for Christís sake. Obadiah could not do it. Obadiah feared God. But he

was not able to witness God publicly. He was not able to stand make a public stand for the living God.

Such a disaster should not occur with us.

Therefore people of God, prepare yourself and acquire strength from the Holy Spirit, so that you may be able to make a public stand for Christ. Submit yourselves so that you may become ambassadors of Christ, to be useful for Evangelism, and to proclaim the word of God.

Revolt against sin; without compromise. Get ready for holy living, and commence a new life.

There is a reward in Heaven, my Son, daughter, you too will receive a reward in heaven. When the king of Kings makes his Second Coming, the wages will be in His hands, and the reward in his possession. Consecrate your life for Him. Give Him your word.

Lord, from today on, I am Yours. Let me become a new creation from today. May God bless us.



Chapter 15

And Ahab had said to Obadiah, "Go into land to all the springs of water and to all the brooks; perhaps we may find grass to keep the horses and mules alive so that we will not have to kill any livestock." So they divided the land between them to explore it, Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. 1Kings18:5-6

Ahab was king. He was the authority delegated to govern and deliver the people. He was the person responsible for leading, guiding, safeguarding and fostering the people, who were dependent on him.

However Ahab forgot about the people. He forgot that they were starving. He forgot to think of ways to deliver the people from their predicament.

Ahab was not concerned with the needs of the people. Then what was his main issue of concern? The animals should not perish; so we should search throughout the land near the brooks and springs to see if we get grass so that the horses and donkeys may live. So Ahab sent his servant Obadiah one way while he left the other way. For what purpose? To find grass.

Ahab ventured out to find and gather grass for his donkeys and horses, and he made Obadiah also set out for the same purpose. Irresponsible kings like Ahab have always caused the downfall and disgrace and destruction of society. Governing authorities are callous to the needs of their own people. It is a sad matter that the authorities delegated to protect the interests of the people, do not fulfil their responsibilities.

In the book of the prophet Malachi, the Holy Spirit of God very clearly and concisely declares thus, in the second chapter from the first verse onwards:

And now O priests, this commandment is for you, If you will not hear, and you will not take it to heart, to give glory to My name, says the Lord of hosts, I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes I have cursed them already, because you did not take them to heart.

Not only so, but the Holy Spirit continues to say:

The law of the truth is in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and equity, and turned many away from iniquity. For the lips of the priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.

Mal. 2:6-7

Some priests do lead others in truth and righteousness, they seek the good path. Since they have been delegated to lead the people, they have submitted and dedicated themselves entirely so as to obtain sufficient spiritual gifts and blessings so that they guard their lips from unrighteousness but keep the counsel of righteousness on their lips, and walk with God in equity and peace and thus help to turn many away from the path of iniquity.

But you have departed from the way, you have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts. Therefore I also have made you contemptible and base before all the people because you have not kept My ways but have shown partiality in the law.

Leaders who show partiality, governing authorities who show favouritism are surely going to face severe punishments.

How destructive and accursed this phenomenon is! How terrible the disgrace it incurs to society!

It is about this that the Holy Spirit of God speaks strongly about through the prophet Malachi.

What the Living God desires to see is that each person fulfils with sincerity the ministry assigned to him.

The king forgot about his subjects. He did not concern himself with their welfare. That the people need to be delivered from the crisis was not an issue of concern to him.

He set out on a search for grass to sustain his donkeys and horses.

Today why do churches fall into ruin? Why does society face destruction? The church authorities who are supposed to show the Living God to others have in effect degraded themselves to seeking worldly esteem and fame and are occupied with worldly issues, with vested interests seeking personal profit and fame.

As a consequence the society stumbles and faces ruin. Innumerable sheep are scattered.

The Shepherds who are delegated to truly protect the interests of the sheep, do not lead them to pasture, do not provide them fodder. But they consume the milk after milking

them. Even that was bearable, if they only consumed the milk; but some shepherds kill and devour the sheep. It is a sad matter. Many spiritual leaders of today virtually devour the flock.

They have no concern for providing them spiritual food. That they should become God's possessions so that they may inherit the kingdom of Heaven is not a matter of concern with them.

As the prophet Malachi said, there is no truthful counsel in their mouths, but there is unrighteousness on their lips, they do not walk with God, no peace or equity. They do not turn others from their iniquity.

To enable others to leave sin and to completely turn away from sin is the ministry of the priest. If the priest, who is entrusted with making others turn away from sin, himself fosters and grows sin, how fearsome the consequences! I am not referring to any particular priests or any spiritual leaders in particular. I include myself among the evangelists, among those who preach God's word, we are entrusted with the responsibility of inspiring others to forsake sin. That is their mission and service.

Those who sow the word of God, those who profess the word of God with the tongue, they are the people who should turn others to God. They are God's emissaries, His representatives. They should stand as the ambassadors of Christ.

They have been appointed from Heaven to fulfill the interests of Heaven on earth. Their office is on earth, the job is here but the appointment order is from Heaven and so is their salary.

Can you estimate the worth of each servant of God? Can you fathom the glory of the servants of Christ, and what their status is? The apostle Paul says in the fifth chapter of the second book of Corinthians, "We are the ambassadors of Christ."

In the second book of Corinthians, the twentieth verse of the fifth chapter states that:

-If we are the ambassadors of Christ what do we preach? We implore others to be reconciled with God on behalf of Christ. What do we implore? Forsake sin and be reconciled with God.

In the Holy Communion service, in the first part of the first song it says:

"Reconcile us O God, by your incomparable mercy and

"Just as you had mercy of Jonah in the sea, so also have mercy on us, and

"Just as you removed the wrath against the Ninevites when they cried out to You."

God heard Jonah's cry when he was cast into the sea. Jonah repented. When the prophet Jonah repented in the sea, God's mercy came upon him.

"Just as you had mercy of Jonah in the sea, so also have mercy on us, so sang the saints of old.

"Just as you removed the wrath against the Ninevites when they cried out to You." So also sang the saints. When the Ninevites repented of their sin, and forsook their sinful ways. Then the wrath of God that was upon them was removed. God relented and began to bless them again.

Reconcile us O God by Your incomparable grace towards us.†

We are turning away from our sins. We are forsaking sin and coming to repentance. Henceforth we commence a new life. We bid farewell to the former life that we have lead. Lord, reconcile us to You. Thus sang the saints of old:

Everyday I praise your boundless mercy, my Saviour,
Everywhere I see your abundant gifts,

The wrath that You had against the Ninevites was abolished,

Just as You had mercy on Jonah in the sea, so also have mercy on us,

Reconcile us O God, by Your incomparable grace.

My brothers, the responsibility that we, the ambassadors of Christ have is to proclaim that we should reconcile ourselves to God. As representatives of Christ we stand in His stead, and implore others to be reconciled to God. It is as if God was exhorting others through us.

You are God's servants . Do not become a leader like Ahab who set out seeking feed for the donkeys, horses and camels.

Instead become useful instruments in God's hands to save the people, redeem them and exhort them to leave their sinful ways. For this, submit your life to Christ. The work of God is immense and extensive. Become saints for Christ and submit yourselves in to His hands.



Chapter 16

Now as Obadiah was on his way, suddenly Elijah met him; and he recognised him, and fell on his face, and said, 'Is that you, my lord Elijah?' And he answered him, 'It is I, go tell your master, 'Elijah is here!' Then he said, 'How much have I sinned that you are delivering your servant into the hand of Ahab to kill me? As the Lord the God of Israel lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to hunt for you, and when they said, 'he is not here', he took an oath from the kingdom or nation that they could not find you.' 'And now you say, Go, tell your master that Elijah is here!' 'And it shall come to pass that as soon as I am gone from you, that the Spirit of the Lord will carry you to a place I do not know; so that when I go and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will kill me. But I your servant has feared the Lord from my youth.'

'Was it not reported to my lord, what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord, how I hid one hundred of the Lord's prophets, fifty to a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now you say, 'Go, tell your master that Elijah is here!' and he will kill me!'

Then Elijah said, "As the Lord the God of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely present myself to him today." 1 Kings 18: 7-16

Obadiah encountered Elijah. Obadiah fell face down in front of the prophet Elijah. Obadiah asked Elijah if he was indeed his lord Elijah. He replied in the affirmative, and told him to go to his master and intimate to him that he was here.

Elijah was on his way to reveal himself to Ahab. He was ready to make a public appearance in Ahab's sight.

Obadiah was stricken with fear, I may go and tell Ahab that Elijah is here, and Ahab would come seeking to capture him; in the past three years Ahab had been sending numerous soldiers to track down Elijah. When they said, "He is not here," he took an oath from them that they could not find him. They were seeking you in every place and country; they searched in every town and forest, they swore that they could not locate your whereabouts. In such a situation, when I tell him that I have found you, he will surely come for you. And the angel of God will surely move you to another place.

Obadiah said, "After you are hidden and when Ahab is unable to find you, he will surely kill me because I told him that I have seen you."

Obadiah is a coward. He is terror-stricken. He is weakened, and loves only himself. He is trying to save his own life.

"He who is not willing to deny himself, and take up the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple" is what Jesus said. To deny oneself, to hate oneself, to abandon oneself; to make oneself nothing is the condition to follow Jesus. To deny oneself is to throw away all personal interests. To refrain from thinking about my future, is a difficult thing.

The Christian life is very costly. It is of great worth. It is priceless. It is not simple or cheap. This is a time when people are in pursuit of cheap grace. They believe in God. They confess that Christ is their saviour. But they just cling onto a verse that states that they will be saved without thinking the seriousness or gravity of the situation. There are ministers who are unwilling to bear the risks, but want to utilise the Christian life for personal profit, status, good name, fame, recognition, honour and worth.

Obadiah belonged to this group of people. He was afraid. He feared that he would be killed.

Brothers, Christ came into this world to die. Christ came into this world after denying Himself, and He took up the cross after forsaking Himself.

Christ said that His servants would likewise deny themselves. Our Lord once declared, It is enough for a servant to be like His master, and for a disciple to be like His teacher.

Just as the Teacher endured sacrifice, so also the disciple should. Just as the teacher lived, so also the disciple should live.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has forwarded us : The world may not love you, the world will hate you. Because of My name, everyone will hate you. Because of My name everyone will despise you.

For the sake of Christ's name you will have to suffer loss and endure persecution. However in this modern society Christian workers and ministers do not deny themselves; instead they use the Way of Christ as a means to elevate themselves, to make themselves grow and prosper. This is a sad fact.

When I say this, I humbly examine myself. I humble myself before Christ.

I pray: ÆO my Lord, let me be able to carry out your work bearing your attitude.í

To follow Christ in the way He has trod before me, in His footsteps, to be ready to go in that same way, carrying the cross; I pray that the Lord will grant me a profound submission for this.

O merciful Lord, help me follow in your footsteps in which you walked, carrying the cross, as an object of ridicule, a target of false accusation, denied by all, misunderstood by all; even when everyone vehemently shouted ìCrucify Him, crucifyÖí you did not reply or justify Yourself, nor did you bear illwill or a complaint against anyone, but calmly went forward committed to the sole desire of fulfilling the Living Fatherís will; I pray that You will give me the mind to follow these footsteps of Christ, along the Way of the Cross.

Obadiah was unable to deny himself. He was afraid that Ahab will kill him.

The fearful will not inherit the kingdom of God. Godís servants should be courageous. Courage for Christ, courage in Christ, the courage imparted by Christ, these are our treasures, our riches, our precious possessions. That should be the essence and keynote of our lives.

To go in the same way as Christ did is the risk of a Christian. Dear friends, have you ever thought about it. In the shadow of the cross, beneath it, the beloved disciple John was there. Where did the other disciples go? They all ran away like cowards. No one remained, everyone scattered as the sheep would, if the shepherd was struck down with the sword.

There was the dear Mother, crying and sobbing lying at the foot of the cross. There was poor Magdalene Mary, with a grateful heart for her Lord; lying there crying with grief that such a fate had befallen Him.

However in the crowd below there were the Jewish religious leaders, there were the High priests of the Temple at Jerusalem, there were the scribes. In these were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the prominent among the Jewish religious leaders, the distinguished members of the Sanhedrin and many other people. All were laughing with glee that they were finally getting rid of Him.

The nuisance due to this Jesus was over.

He was being crucified. He was shattered, being nailed to the cross, in a few hours he would be no more, they were able to subdue Him in the grip of the cross, they could confine Him to the wood of the cross with a few nails. They shouted ecstatic with joy and glee because the nuisance from Him was over. They were jumping with joy.

In between they spoke up, they ridiculed, passers-by scorned Him saying: 'You who said you tear the Temple down and rebuild it in three days, come down from the cross and save Yourself. They derided Him saying, 'You saved others, why don't You save yourself?'

Jesus bore all the accusations lying on the cross in excruciating pain. Tormented by the pain, but without grudge or protest, he lay on the cross. Just imagine that for a minute.

He lay on the cross receiving insults scorn and false accusations. There was no one to speak for Jesus. The invalid who had been bedridden for 38 years, and received healing did not speak up and say, 'Why have you done such a thing,

this Jesus is the person who enabled me to get up and walk today.

Jesus gave healing to the woman who was bent over with a spirit of infirmity for 18 years. But she did not come at this juncture. "Oh I have spent 18 years walking bent over, the person responsible for straightening me up is this Jesus," she never uttered such a word.

The blind man did not testify there. "I was blind, but Jesus, enabled me to see," he did not speak up.

The leper who was healed did not say, "I was a leper, this Jesus is the reason why I became whole, and am able to walk among other people in society." "Oh, that such a fate should have befallen Him!. Oh what you have done is very shameful. There was no one ready to denounce it. Everyone forsook Him.

When I am abandoned by all, forsaken by all, then Jesus, You are the Lord of my life, my delight, my future, my refuge and my fortress. Jesus, You alone are my love and my strength. In You alone will I glory and take pride.

As the Apostle Paul said: "But God forbid that I should glory in anything except in the cross of our lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

As you hear these words O people of God, will you prepare to deny yourselves?

Instead of being a coward like Obadiah, become courageous like Elijah. Prepare yourselves to make a stand in front of Ahab. Arm yourself to battle the enemy arrayed before you. The battle between Ahab and Elijah. It is actually the conflict between the people of God and the Devil. A battle

between the Holy Spirit and evil spirit, between the Living God and Satan.

In this conflict let us stand close to God. We can rebuke and ward off the forces of the devil. For this let us say goodbye to our sinful life. Let us forsake all things that the enemy, the devil may stake claim over and let us commence a new life. Let God help everyone of us to do the same.



Amruthadhara T. V. Programme

| | | | | |
|----------|---|---------------|---|-------------------|
| Friday | : | Asia Net News | : | 6.30 am - 7.00 am |
| Saturday | : | Surya TV | : | 6.30 am - 7.00 am |
| Sunday | : | Jeevan TV | : | 6.30 am - 7.00 am |

Amruthadhara Radio Programme

Tuesdays : SW 25 mtr : 7.45 PM

Message by : **Prof. M. Y. Yohannan**
 Former Principal
 St. Peter's College, Kolenchery

CRF's Main Meetings in Kolenchery

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|---|
| 2nd Saturday | : | 9.30 am - 2.00 pm (Followed by 2nd Saturday) | } at : Mechankara, Prof. M.Y. Yohannan's Residence, Valethupady Bus Stop, Kolenchery - Pattimattom Road, Kadayiruppu |
| 2nd Sunday | : | 12.30 pm - 5.00 pm (Followed by 2nd Saturday) | |
| 3rd Sunday | : | 12.30 pm - 5.00 pm | |
| Mondays | : | 6.00 pm - 8.00 pm | |
| 1st Tuesday | : | 10.00 am - 12.30 pm (ladies Meeting) | |
| Fridays | : | 6.00 pm - 8.00 pm (Bible Class) | } Prof. C.M. Mathew Chanthiam Residence |
| 1st & 3rd Wednesdays | : | (Young Men Meet) : 6.30 pm - 9.00 pm | |