

STREAMS IN THE DESERT

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GOSPEL MESSAGES

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

Publisher

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PROF. M Y YOHANNAN

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Gospel Messages

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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, prophesy unto my people Israel.”*

- Amos 7:14, 15.

Prof. M Y Yohannan was born in a middle class agricultural family I Kadayiruppu, Kolenchery, Kerala. Three of his brothers died before his birth. He lost his beloved 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 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, Kolenchery and continued there for the next thirty-three years. He was appointed Principal of the same college in 1995 and retired after a stint of two years.

Even as a young teacher, he was an active member of a voluntary gospel missionary group in Kerala. Many well reputed and respected clergy as well as laymen sincerely participated in the activities of the Voluntary Missionary Society, which, in the local tongue, was known as '*Swamedhaya Suvisesha Sangham*'. As a result of its earnest effort on evangelisation, a large number of people got revived in the Jacobite/Orthodox church and other churches.

In the year 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, 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 ministry. He also visited Great Briton and many of the Gulf countries in the Middle East and addressed several Gospel conventions.

In the year 1997, Prof. Yohannan commenced the '**Amruthadhara**' Radio Ministry on all Tuesday evenings. It is due to the wholehearted encouragement of the listeners, a second programme, meant for the Gulf countries, was started on all Friday nights. Since October 2001, another programme on all Saturdays, from 7:45 PM to 8:00 PM is being transmitted. All these radio programmes helped to preach the Gospel to the unreached and remote areas and segments of people, like in prisons, armed forces' barracks, hostels, etc.

Later, Prof. Yohannan realised the potential of television, one of the most influential media today, to preach the Gospel. In the year 2000, the '**Amruthadhara**' TV programme was started. Presently, the thirty-minute programme is being telecast on '*Asianet News*', '*Soorya 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 started publishing his inspiring Gospel messages, studies and devotions in book form. So far, as on December 2006, he has published thirty-nine books, excluding this. Most of them are out-of-print within a short period. Few more books are getting ready for release.

Prof. Yohannan is fully and deeply engaged in the activities of the Christian Revival Fellowship (CRF), a registered inter denominational charitable and religious trust, as its founder president, 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 that **“It’s the soul that needs change, not the religion; it’s the inner-man (heart) that needs change, not the church.”**

Prof. Yohannan gets whole-hearted support in his LORD’S ministry from his wife, Alice, a retired teacher. The Yohannans 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. JAYA JEEVITHAM
10. VISWASA JEEVITHAM
11. VADAMALAR
12. DIVYARADHANA
13. ENIKKU KUDIPPAN THARUMO?
14. NEETHIMAN AAKUNNATHENGANE?
15. THURANNA VATHIL
16. VARAVUM CHELAVUM
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. ELIYAVINTE DAIVAM EVIDE?
32. PRAVACHAKANALLA, PRAVACHAKA SISHYANUMALLA
33. MUDRAMOTHIRAMAKKUM
34. ENIKKU KAZHCHA PRAPIKKENAM
35. ENIKKU ASAKKU VAKAYUNDO?
36. INNER PEACE (ENGLISH)
37. AVARKKU BHAKSHIPPAN KODUPPIN
38. GLITTERING FUTURE (ENGLISH)
39. EKANTHATHAYUDE ANDHATHA

PREFACE

When Prof. M Y Yohannan Sir asked me to write a preface to his beautiful book, “Streams in the Desert”, I thought and wrote to him it was very kind of him to have said those very encouraging words. It is the doing of the Lord, that I am what I am today. Glory and honour to Him!

I have gone through the book and surely it is a very good reading.

The title, “Streams in the Desert” has ten chapters; all are self-explanatory Gospel messages with numerous biblical quotations to back up the thematic observations of the author. As being the 40th book by the same author on biblical theme, there is hardly any anxiety about the style and structure of this book. Had it been his maiden title, things would have been different. It is presented in scholarly elegance with great narrative skill. As such, it is a satisfying

meaty work. The centrepiece of the book is a meticulously documented Christian testimony with a call to repent and prepare your hearts for Christ. I am simply amazed and even mystified by reading this title and its well told and exhaustive details.

Let me briefly introduce the book. The key words of the book are: Divine Provision; Divine Care; Divine Mission; Divine Ministry; Divine Revelation: Divine Feeding; Divine Healing; Divine Guidance; Divine Victory; Divine Sweetness and Divine Shelter. The major highlights of the first chapter among others including the testimony of Valakom Jose, now living in perfect harmony with his wife, saved life of Kuttachen and the divine provisions realised by Benny of Chemmannar. The chapter concludes by observing that for realising perfect peace and happiness, one must know and accept that, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb.13:8).

Chapter two substantiates the point that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him. The testimony of the rail track worker in Kottayam as well as the seven steps involved in the divine provisions realised by Hagar and her son are pointers that God will hear our cry for help, if it comes from a broken and contrite heart.

Chapter three deals at length on God's promises to Jacob and the Divine Mission entrusted to Moses. Once you are in the orbit of His grace you have the solemn assurance that, "I will not leave you or forsake you" (Heb.13:5). This chapter concludes with a quote from Isaiah 6:8, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?"

Divine Ministry is the topic of discussion in the fourth chapter. While counting our blessings and giving thanks to God, we have to humble ourselves to repent and prepare our hearts for the Lord. This was the call heard in the wilderness. Even today, the Lord is asking us the same question, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?"

People on their liberation march started murmuring and grumbling against Moses and Aaron as they were devoid of food. Divine Feeding follows. He gave food to all. They ate Manna, the spiritual food. In John 6:35, it is said, "I am the bread of life". This divine feeding takes place in each Eucharist and how sad that very few are aware of its fuller implications, leave alone getting prepared for its partaking, chapter five ends on this note.

Divine Healing is the theme of chapter six. On their journey forward, they were both mentally and physically tired and even exhausted thoroughly. They were mostly confused, as they had no vision or adequate perspective. Here comes the divine healing as the

panacea to treat all their maladies. This is possible only for those with strong convictions.

The Ark of the Covenant is the shadow of Christ. It is the leading light in the journey through the desert. In chapter seven the discussion is around the Ark. Ark was seen as an object. It should have been perceived as the presence of God. It also deals with the spiritual meaning of the Tabernacle – heavenly tent, the Church of Christ and Lord Jesus Himself. It says when we are devoid of divine guidance, the experience will be that of, “The glory has departed from Israel” (1 Sam.4:21-22).

Divine Victory is the subject matter of chapter eight. Satan had tried in vain with Jesus to test Him in relation to Faith, Hope and Love as the story is known to all. Only those who are firmly rooted in the Word of God would experience divine victory.

Prayer to God is the only solution to all our problems. We all have “Marahs” – different types for several people. There are very many with totally shattered hopes. As Moses had cried out to God, we too have to take recourse in prayer to God to make our “Marahs” sweet. In fact, symbolically our sins were borne by Jesus on the Cross at Golgotha to convert our *Marahs* into divine sweetness, as chapter nine likes us to believe.

Chapter ten says that we have our beloved (Jesus) to lean on in our journey through the desert. The author takes us to Nobel laureate cum great poet, Gurudev -Tagore to prove his point with a beautiful illustration. Our shepherd is Jesus Christ. If that is accepted in principle, it is time for us to act decisively, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev.3:20).

Let me put some personal observations about the book:

1. It is an easy read for busy executives, very gripping for students and a path finding and life transforming title for the teen ages.
2. It has a systematic and gradual approach of a teacher, who is engaging a class of committed students.
3. Most of the chapters commence with a recapitulation of the foregoing chapter and as such, it ensures steady flow of the main argument.
4. Readers are invited, not cajoled to think about many a time the relevance of various episodes in this book.
5. Another hallmark of the book is reconciliation as the main key to success. People want respect, not shame. People look for grace, not condemnation. People want reconciliation, not alienation.

6. What really makes the work stand out from other books is its refreshing lack of academic dogma. But at the same time it deals with the subject both extensively and sensitively.
7. The book brings out very clearly that it is not important as where do you come from, but where are you heading, will decide as to where you will end up.
8. The title sums up unambiguously that Jesus Christ is the model and our north star.
9. Though at times it leads and hides, the finest contribution has been its specific observations.
10. However interesting, at times it is somewhat beside the point like the concluding paragraphs of chapter six.
11. Though at times repetitious, crippling blemishes are not seen on that account in this book.

A careful analysis of the underlying thinking process of the book in question logically leads to look forward for the **marks of a renewed church**. It is a learning church, caring and loving church, worshipping church and evangelical church. Prof. M Y Yohannan depicts the entire model of such a refined church.

The core conclusion of the book is simple enough for any one to make out. Repent and prepare your hearts for Jesus.

Remember that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him. Make sure that glory has not departed from you as has happened in Israel (1 Sam.4:21-22). “Be still, and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10). Prepare yourself for His coming.

It is eminently readable and very handy and as such I am sure it will be an asset to libraries, Youth Groups, Sunday Schools, Bible colleges and Seminaries in India and abroad.

Now, by reading this book, may the good Lord cause His face shine up on you in your going out and coming in; in your lying down and rising up; in your labour and leisure and in your tears and laughter, until such time you stand before God when there is no sunset or dawn, but eternal bliss only. I wish Prof. M Y Yohannan all success in his endeavours in the different fields of preaching, teaching and writing such thought provoking subjects related to blessed practical life.

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Christmas 2006.
Ooramana.

FOREWORD

I am extremely happy to publish the English translation of my book "*Marubhoomiyile Neerpoika*". First of all I dedicate myself at the sweet feet of Jesus giving Him all the glory and praise for all my events in my life.

Really I had various bitter experiences in my life, which may be called as deserts in life. But my Lord Jesus Christ turned every thing for good and my desert like experiences became streams of peace and joy. I have seen the same in many lives, who heard the Word of God and got repented and started a new life, rather Christ like life. Christianity is not a philosophy of thoughts, but a way of genuine ideal daily life. I got this secret at the age of seventeen and since then I proclaimed the Word of God having experienced the love and sanctity at heart. I believe that Christ alone can give the purity and holiness at heart. Hence my attempts and endeavours for writing books on Christian life based on the Scriptures.

I do hope many may benefit the soothing touch of Lord Jesus Christ by reading this book. I humbly request your earnest prayers for me.

I am deeply indebted to Mrs. Elizabeth John M.A., B.T., P.G.C.T.E., who has translated the book to English. She is a very well known Senior English teacher and lecturer in various Schools and Colleges, in which Mar Athanasius College, Kothamangalam, Christhava Mahilalayam, Aluva, Mar Thoma Public School, Thengode, M E S Indian School, Doha, Qatar and Higher Secondary Schools, Maharashtra are remarkable. She was Principle of Christhava Mahilalayam, Aluva for three years where she was awarded for commendable service as Principal. She had undergone a course in “Spiritual Warfare and Counselling” from Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, USA.

I may hereby express my sincere thanks and gratitude to Dr. K M George M.A., Ph.D. (Economics-Micro Finance), Director, AGES, who is a highly reputed intelligentsia, for writing a very fine preface. He is formerly Chief Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor, Government of Papua New Guinea, ADB, UNDP and UNOPS, Consultant, FAO Team Leader in Afghanistan. I consider it a great

privilege to me for including the preface of such an eminent person in my book. May God bless him.

I know that there is no need to congratulate the earnestness and sincerity of my dear brothers who has rendered their hard work to edit, correct and print this book.

I humbly pray to Lord Jesus Christ to bestow His abundant blessings on all who worked for this and who read this book.

M Y Yohannan

PREFACE

(for the Malayalam Edition)

Prof. M Y Yohannan is my beloved, whom I love and care for like my own son. I am privileged to use his initials 'M' and 'Y' as 'my' to express my deep love and tenderness for him. He respects and loves me like his own father. '*Marubhoomiyile Neerpoika*' (Streams in the Desert) is his twenty-sixth book. This very old *Achen* considers it a blessing to get this opportunity to write a preface to this book. I praise God again and again for giving me this responsibility to steer the channel towards the streams in the desert.

Most of the renowned speakers need not be good writers. Most of good writers need not be renowned speakers either. On the contrary, there is a rare combination of these two skills in my Yohannan, a rare and joyful combination of the art of rhetoric with the blessed boon of a lucid literary composition. Lo! Here is another book from my dear Yohannan's blessed pen: Streams in the Desert.

It is so natural that a person who runs along the right track in a race would be noticed even when the remaining contestants take the wrong track. A cross-country race of ten thousand metres was

once held along the riverside in California. There were one hundred and twenty eight runners. Micaden Keiv, one of the runners, was running little away from others. The spectators thought that he was running in the wrong track. However, he beckoned others to follow him. But only four out of one hundred and twenty seven contestants believed and followed him. Only these five, who had run in the correct track, were found eligible for the prize in the end.

Why I am saying this is, once I too greatly misunderstood Prof. Yohannan. I presumed that Prof. Yohannan was not moving in the correct path and I criticized him publicly. When my children (Dr. C M George, Prof. CM Mathew, Dr. Reji Mathew and Mrs. Suma Paul) attended the fellowship meetings of Christian Revival Fellowship along with Prof. Yohannan, I forbade, reprimanded and even took disciplinary actions against them.

Now I feel extremely sorry for those days. Now, not only my children, but also many people from my family, parish and locality are actively participating in the fellowship meetings. I am really amazed to see the transformation in their character, prayer life and the thirst for holy life. Their genuine fervour in participating in the holy confession and communion and upholding of faith and traditions of the forefathers made me, who once misunderstood

the fellowship, to think seriously. Subsequently, I started attending the Bible Classes of Prof. Yohannan at Mathewkutty's residence on every Fridays and other meetings at Prof. Yohannan's residence. I could hear pure Gospel. I, who had spent my life in preaching others in the Malankara Church, got the humility to realise that it is me who had to greatly change. It made me aware of the holiness of Heavenly Kingdom as well as my unholiness. Even though I had not committed any visible sins I realised that my hypocrisy is a heinous sin. My external life was a respectable one; but I could see that my heart was full of pride, impurity, pre conceived notions, displeasure, selfishness, etc. The repentance, which I received about seventeen years back, enabled me to receive a contrite heart. Even at this very old age, I am having tears of repentance. Today what peace and joy! I praise God from my thanks filled heart.

In the Christian Revival Fellowship, I could witness the power of the Holy Spirit moving over many hardened sinners making them repentant. I could personally see the heavenly peace in many families, which were once experiencing the agonies of hell. Now I realise how wrong I was in preventing my children from going to this fellowship meetings. I repented sincerely and now, my whole family is attending the fellowship meetings. Besides, we started listening to Prof. Yohannan's radio and TV messages and reading all his books. I wholeheartedly wish that all the endeavours of this fellowship, which

proclaims the true Gospel of Christ and loves all with out any distinction among churches and denominations, may benefit for the spiritual revival of many more people.

I could invite Prof. Yohannan, who had extensively preached the Gospel in many churches and Conventions, to my Parish (Chanthiam Church). It is a very common thing that large crowd would gather to hear his messages. I could comprehend the depth and meanings of worship songs from Prof. Yohannan's messages. Rooted in Christian values and with solid foundation of true Christian faith, he emphasis through his messages and books, the eternal salvation achieved by Jesus Christ on the cross, sanctification granted by the Holy Spirit and the preparation for the second advent of Christ.

I have yet another personal relationship with this selfless servant of God. Thomas, Prof. Yohannan's youngest son has married Meena, my grand daughter and Prof. C M Mathew's daughter. We are related family wise also.

The sanctification of heart is the glaring theme in all his books. Prof. Yohannan highlights the importance of attainment of eternal life, preparation for the Second Advent of Christ, justification and victory over sin through the Holy Blood of Christ in all his messages and books.

The book 'Streams in the Desert' portrays the comfort, hope and solace obtained through the Living Water, the Word of Christ, in the hearts grieved with depression, disappointment, boredom and discomfort.

This is the twenty sixth book of my dear Yohannan, a man acclaimed at all levels by all alike; a theologian of the highest order, a dazzling speaker, an orator blessed with beautiful and simple style of language, a model Christian worker, who persistently attempts to translate Christ like character in him. Though written in simple language, this book has got a splendid style born out of life's bitter experiences, ideas get resurgence through letters, words and lines in an excellent manner.

I wish all my good wishes to the book, the author, and the Christian Revival Fellowship led by Prof. Yohannan. Let me present this book 'Streams in the Desert' in front of all the devout men by offering my prayers to the God Almighty to make this book instrumental in bringing about comfort, blessing and salvation for the souls of many thousands.

Rev. Fr. Mathew,
Chanthiam.

Moovattupuzha,
30.09.2004.

FOREWORD

(for the Malayalam Edition)

“Work as if you were to live hundred years; pray as if you were to die tomorrow”. Benjamin Franklin, who lived from 1706 to 1790 said these words.

You should always strive and work in a persistent manner as if you were to live for many years. You have to live with this awareness that you have a lot to finish. You should humble enough to think that work done is not enough. You should work; not out of a sense of failure, rather with zeal. This book is a humble step towards the fulfilment of that zeal.

Many lives are dry barren wilderness; here springs of love dried up, only a scorched earth with out trace of compassion. Stinging word, taunts, harsh behaviour insinuated by inferiority complex create many prisoners for such human lives where they have no relief from external factors. When the soothing words of

Christ, the Living Water, flow into their lives, they experience the trickling down of mercy in an immeasurable way, their lives are restored enjoying themselves peace, calmness and comfort like that one gets from the Streams of Desert in an arid soul. This book is my humble attempt to transmit the full impact of consolation in many parched souls.

Mother Teresa has once told: “The hands that touch are holier than the lips that speak.” What an amazing truth! A comforting touch is holier than sweet words. It is only when one gets the healing touch Christ’s pierced hands that one cherishes the experience of the streams in the desert. I desire and wish each person who reads this book get this blessed experience.

Rev. Fr. Mathew Chanthiam, the most venerated octogenarian, has written a very touching preface to this book. My gratitude, respect and sincere obligation towards him is beyond words. Though his body is weak due to old age, his mind is remarkably alert. Each of his words is proof of his sound frame of intellect, memory and mind, for he maintains such youthful vigour and liveliness in his choice of words and expression. I express my heartfelt gratitude to all his loving words and more especially for the fact that he is the dear father of my most respectful friend and co-worker, Mathewkuttychayan (Prof. C M Mathew Chanthiam).

Next, I would like to pay acknowledgements to all those dear friends, who helped to bring out this book in public. I am deeply indebted Mr. A J Aby (Retd. General Manager, TCM Kalamassery), Mr. Mathews (accounts Manager, Telephones, Ernakulam). I wish and pray to the merciful LORD to grant them suitable rewards for their work.

Let me conclude this foreword with a prayer for God's grace, for all my readers to get consolation, peace and eternal life through the reading of this book.

M Y Yohannan

Chapter - 1

*"I will make rivers flow on barren heights,
and springs within valleys." Isaiah 41:18 (NIV)*

The desert is a dry, barren, often sandy area. Not even a tiny droplet of water will be found there. There is no rain. The wilderness of desolation is always dry, shrivelled and uninhabited desert island.

The Almighty God says He will make this barren land, which hasn't got even a tiny droplet of water for its life, into pools of water.

"For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37

"All things are possible with God." Mark 10:27

The God, who makes the impossible possible is the Eternal God. The God who parted the Red Sea and prepared a dry path for his people is the living God. The God who parted the flooding waters of the Jordan and led His people across dry ground is the Almighty

God. The God who miraculously fed His servant by means of a crow is our God.

“See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the desert

and streams in the wasteland.

The wild animals honour me,

the jackals and the owls,

because I provide water in the desert

and streams in the wasteland,

to give drink to my people, my chosen,”

Isaiah 43: 19-20(NIV)

“Then will the eyes of the blind be opened

and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

Then will the lame leap like a deer,

and the mute tongue shout for joy.

Water will gush forth in the wilderness

and streams in the desert.

The burning sand will become a pool,

the thirsty ground bubbling springs.”

Isaiah 35: 5-7(NIV)

Miracles are happening nowadays also. The day of miracles is not over. God is the God of miracles.

Once there was a poor labourer. He was addicted to alcohol. He was running into great loss because of his drinking habit. He used to spend all what he earned on alcohol.

Luckily, he heard the word of God and repented. He stopped the drinking habit and now he could save all his money. He got peace and therefore became energetic and enthusiastic.

The other labourers who were his friends got jealous of him. They made fun of him by saying that he had made a great blunder. They continually censured and despised him. One day they said "You say you have repented. But we know that it is not possible for you to believe that great miracles happened. You are not that foolish! Can anyone believe the incident where Jesus Christ turned water into wine?" To this the man replied, "Jesus' turning water into wine two thousand years ago in Palestine is not so much of an issue for me. But recently Jesus worked a miracle in my home by turning beer into furniture."

"Oh, is it right?" They wondered.

"Yes, surely. You just come to my house and see the miracle."

“How is it that happened?” They again burst out.

“See, by abandoning the habit of drinking, I could spare much money. Before being repented and converted, I had no money even to make my both ends meet. I was in utter debt. But now, I have enough money and so I could buy furniture and furnish my house.”

This is what is called streams in the desert.

There was a young man who for eleven years had not spoken to his parents on account of a small matter and lived in displeasure, disappointment and bitterness. This man named Jose lives in Valakom near Muvattupuzha. When he heard the Word of God and repented he went back home to his parents and asked forgiveness. Today they live in perfect unity and love. Miracles! Streams in the desert!

A young man named Joy from Kumanode set fire to his school building out of his anger towards his teacher. Joy used to behave like an insane person. He used to laugh when he sees someone crying and he gets enraged when he sees someone laughing. He burst into laughter when he saw his wife crying over his sick child. This man Joy once hid himself with a chopper in hand, in a deserted house, planning to avenge himself on his

enemy on his way. Fortunately he did not come through that way that day!

Joy repented. Joy's character underwent a change. Streams in the desert!

A man named Kuttachan from high range lost all his three sons. It was on the pretext of drowning his sorrows that he began consuming liquor. Gradually he started taking drugs also. Everyday he gets intoxicated and beats his wife. Sometimes, he goes wild and bites his own fingers. At other times he pulls out his hair. Once he put a knife to his wife's neck and said, "I will kill you now." "Why do you kill me?" the poor woman asked. "I want to see blood-the blood of a human being."

Luckily, for some reason, that day no danger occurred. Kuttachen repented. Today he is living in peace. Streams in the desert!

One day Benny who stays at Chemmannar in Udumpanchola Taluk returned home by evening; he had been away for the whole day. He found the house closed. "Where are my mother and brother? Father must be in the toddy shop." he said to himself.

When Benny opened the door and entered the house he found his father in the kitchen holding a spade. He saw a long pit in the kitchen. Father said “I will kill your mother today and bury her in this pit.”

Benny became afraid and ran back. But his father caught hold of his neck and pushed him to the corner of the room. He realized that his father was trying to kill him. The poor fellow fainted. When he regained consciousness, his father was not seen anywhere. Father had returned to the liquor shop. He ran out and hid himself in the jungle. Later on, he came to know that both his mother and brother were hiding in the jungle, as they were afraid to sleep at home that night.

Benny started drinking alcohol. He decided to kill his father. He did not realize that his family was getting ruined due to his drinking habit. At that time Benny was the trustee of Chemmannar Jacobite Church; he used to find pleasure in abusing and scandalizing the Christian Revival Fellowship and all God’s children including me.

Nevertheless, Benny repented. He acknowledged Lord Jesus Christ as his saviour. He stopped taking alcohol. He

apologized to his father and got reconciled. Today Benny's family is leading a prosperous life. Streams in the desert!

There are ever so many experiences of this kind. There are families, which were once bankrupt now living in peace! There are ever so many estranged wives and husbands now living together in love. There are ever so many young men who were in the grip of bad habits and orgies now transformed as sons of solace in their families!

It was to create streams in the desert that the Lord Jesus Christ was born into the world and for the same cause he died on the cross. Seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, Isaiah wrote why Christ ought to be born in the world.

"The spirit of the sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion-

to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendour.” Isaiah 61:1-3

The prophet Isaiah describes Christ's ministry by signs and wonders in the thirty fifth chapter.

“Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
Then will the lame leap like a deer,
And the mute tongue shout for joy.
Water will gush forth in the wilderness
And streams in the desert.
The burning sand will become a pool,
The thirsty ground bubbling springs.
In the haunts where jackals once lay,
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.” Isaiah 35:5-7

The greatest miracle is that a human being who lives hardened by sin leaves his sinful life and leads a transformed life.

The feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes is indeed a miracle. The fact that the boy showed willingness to offer to the Lord the five loaves and two fishes, which he himself could have eaten is indeed the greatest miracle. The greatest miracle is the transformation that occurs in man's hearts! The consecration in the lives of human soul – this is the real wonder!

It is a privilege to lay a life, which is shrivelled like that of a desert, beset with anxieties, murmurings, miseries, afflictions, at the feet of Christ. Amidst crises and problems one should look at Christ with full faith in order to attain comfort. This indeed is the real dedication.

It is when we dedicate our all at the feet of Christ like the Virgin Mary who said: “Behold, I am the LORD’s servant. May it be to me as you have said.”- that the real miracle takes place.

Dear friend, will you surrender yourself to Christ to enable Him to take complete control and rule over your life? Have you got the firm conviction that you will live each moment according to the will of Christ?

If so, happiness and prosperity will flow through your life in the coming months and years. You can get perfect peace and happiness here itself.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever”-
Hebrews 13:8.



Chapter - 2

*“Therefore I am now going to allure her
I will lead her into the desert
And speak tenderly to her.” Hosea 2:14*

In the prophetic book of Hosea, we see the picture of the eternal God lamenting over the unfaithfulness of Israelites. This Prophecy was written around B.C.800. The “redeeming love” is the principal theme of the book.

Hosea the Prophet had a wife and three children. His wife’s name was Gomer. She had left her husband and gone after other men. God commanded Hosea to forgive her and accept her as his wife. The Prophet completely obeyed Him.

The relationship between God and Israel is symbolized and illustrated through the description of the relationship between the prophet and Gomer. This illustrates the eternal love of God in forgiving and accepting His people when they had forsaken Him.

The following verse indicates Gods hearty dealing with His people in the midst of their fiery experience in the desert where they were led into it by God Himself.

“Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her” Hosea 2:14

We can see a similar verse in the Prophetic Book of Ezekiel.

“I will bring you into the desert of the nations and there, face to face, I will execute judgment upon you. Ezekiel 20:35

God declared to Ezekiel:

“The hand of he LORD was upon me there, and He said to me, ‘Get up and go out to the plain, and there I will speak to you’”. Ezekiel 3:22

It is hard for anyone to bear the hardship, pain, drought and dryness of the desert. We would wish that we could avoid it. Actually when we perceive the fact that God is intervening with us through these circumstances, we will be filled with the love of God.

We shall gratefully praise Him. Then we shall understand that God will transform even these circumstances for our good.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him who have been called according to His purpose.”

Romans 8:28

Let me narrate one incident. When Ernakulam - Trivandrum Railway Track was being built, a good quantity of the topsoil of the land near Ettumanoor was to be removed. Many workers were engaged in this work. All of them brought lunch with them and had left them in the work shed. When they stopped work for lunch and rest, they came to pick up their lunch packets. They saw a packet being bitten away by a dog. The packet belonged to a child of God. He was a saved person and had dedicated himself to God. Every body used to tease and laugh at him as he was in the habit of saying “Praise the Lord” for every thing. They called him a “trickster”. When they found that it was his lunch that had been taken away by the dog, they said “The trickster’s lunch is gone”. They started laughing.

The man got hurt and was sad. He had to go to the town to find a hotel and had his lunch. By the time he came back after the lunch the work had been already begun. The Supervisor said “You are late for work and hence you may take half day wage and go home”.

Alas, the poor worker took the money and sadly returned home.

That day towards four o' clock in the evening a great catastrophe occurred in that work place. Many people, who were engaged in removing the soil, went under the earth due to a landslide on the hill and many died in that accident.

See how the child of God got saved from that great calamity. It was good that the dog had taken away his lunch. In all things God works for the good of those who love him – this is God's Love.

It is beneficial to think of different experiences of the desert.

First of all what Hagar experienced in the desert is described in Genesis 21:14.

“Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the desert of Beersheba.” Genesis 21:14

Hagar was an Egyptian maid. When the famine came, Abraham had gone to Egypt. His sojourn to Egypt and his bringing of Hagar as his servant happened to be failures in Abraham's life. Abraham was given a promise when he was seventy five years old that a son will be born to him. After waiting for ten years there was no sign of the fulfilment of this promise. Abraham yielded to Sarah's interest by taking Hagar as his wife and Hagar conceived and bore a son. He is Ishmael.

Ishmael was not the promised seed. He was born after the flesh. When Abraham was hundred years old, Isaac was born; the promised seed was born.

Now Ishmael began to trouble Isaac. In New Testament Paul writes:

"At that time the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the spirit. It is the same now." Galatians 4:29

And Sarah said to Abraham, *"Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac."* Genesis 21:10

That is how Abraham sent away Hagar and Ishmael from the house. They wandered in the desert of Beersheba. For Hagar, it was an aimless journey. A journey without destination! A future without a ray of hope! Dark days!

The water in the skin was gone. The bread also got over. The boy began to cry from thirst and he became weak. Hagar realized that the child will die soon out of thirst and hunger.

“She put the boy under one of the bushes. Then she went off and sat down nearby about a bowshot away, for she thought, ‘I cannot watch the boy die.’ And as she sat there nearby she began to sob.” Genesis 21:15f, 16

On one side, the boy’s whimpering cry and the other side mother’s wailing cry.

“God heard the boy crying and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, ‘What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation.’

Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.”

Genesis 21:17-19

The experience of the desert, **Divine provision**. Yes, God provided for Hagar and her son.

Now let us see what were the steps, which led to the divine provision?

First of all, **Rejection** by Abraham and Sarah.

Once beloved now forsaken, like an orphan. Once precious now worthless and rejected like an outcast.

Dear child of God, did you have to experience this sort of rejection and refusals in life? You who have enjoyed yourself the honour, lofty status, high and mighty positions and other special considerations have now lost all. Isn't it your disappointment?

Secondly, **Loneliness**.

Orphaned, feeling helpless, homeless. Once loved and cared for-now all is lost. No help. No sympathy. Have you become gloomy because there is no one to call as your own?

Thirdly, **Aimlessness** – No goal; no target; Where to? How? Why? For whom? As Hagar and the boy wandered in the desert of Beersheba do you also hopelessly wander and grieve by yourself?

“Hagar wandered.” Genesis 21:14f

Fourthly, “I cannot watch the boy die. “And as she sat there nearby she began to sob. Genesis 21: 16 f

Despair – hopelessness. Seeing death face to face. The future is all pitch black without a ray of hope. Is there anyone who has gone under great despair?

Fifthly, **Affection of God.** *“God heard the boy crying.”*
Genesis 21:17

The God who hears the prayer. God who hears the cry. Child of God, don't grow weary; don't despair. There is a God who sees your tears.

“God has heard the boy crying as he lies there”.

Genesis 21:17f

Sixthly, **Promise.**

“For I will make him into great nation “Genesis 21:18 f

Promise is exhausted. This chapter is closed; when there is no hope, suddenly you hear God’s voice granting you a fresh promise. “I will make him into a great nation.”

Seventhly, **New Vision** – Eyes opened. *“God opened her eyes. She saw a well of water.” Genesis 21: 19*

The eyes were opened to see new springs. Son, there are springs in the desert. You are unable to see them because your eyes are closed. There are springs near you to quench the thirst of you and your descendants.

What is this spring? That is the life-giving water which flowed through the cistern of his sacred heart when our Lord and master Jesus Christ was hung on three nails of the cross. You only have to open your eyes, son, daughter; you can see the life-giving stream. You can drink from the river of life. You can swim in the life-giving stream. You can attain sanctification. You can experience life. You can worship in the fullness of the spirit with great jubilation.

When you cross these seven steps you will experience God's care and providence. The God who saw Hagar in the desert of Beersheba, the God who heard the cries of the mother and boy will certainly hear your cry for help.

Come away to the foot of the cross. Trust in the blood of Christ. Begin a sinless life.



Chapter - 3

*“The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.” Isaiah 35:1*

In the desert of Beersheba, God heard Hagar’s cry. God opened Hagar’s eyes. God showed her the streams in the desert.

First, **Divine Provision** - God’s provision in the desert.

Second, **Divine Care**. In the desert, Jacob came to know and experience God’s divine care.

“Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.” Genesis 28:10-12

Jacob was weary and tired of running and walking along the dry patches of the desert of Beersheba. He was looking behind again and again to see whether his brother Esau was following him or not. What his mother had told him in the morning echoed in his heart:

“Your brother Esau is consoling himself with the thought of killing you. Now then, my son, do what I say: Flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran. Stay with him for a while until your brother’s fury subsides. When your brother is no longer angry with you and forgets what you did to him, I’ll send word to you to come back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?”

Genesis 27:42-45.

Running and walking through the desert, Jacob felt aching foot, exhausted all over, enormously tired, thirsty and hungry. It was getting evening. Darkness increased. Seeing the shadows in the pitch dark corners Jacob got scared. ‘Is it Esau there behind that shadow?’ he thought fearfully and that fear hastened and hurried his steps onward.

Now it was really getting darker. He couldn’t take one step ahead. He was too tired to walk any further. He saw a stone. He leaned on it. “If anyone sees me by any chance, let him kill me” he said to himself. “Let me sit here for sometime.” Poor fellow! The

young man out of his weariness sat there leaning on the stone and slept. He wasn't aware of it. He had a dream.

"He saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it."

Genesis 28:12

What a wonder! Angels ascend and descend on a stairway. So I wasn't alone. There were angels with me so long. One group of God's messengers ascend to heaven. Another group descend to earth. So I am not alone or without company. What a foolishness to think that I was all alone. God had commanded his angels to guard me. Now also these angels are entrusted to provide care and protection to me. God's divine care and divine protection!

The stairway that reaches heaven! There above it stood the glorious LORD. God speaks to the tired and weary Jacob and gives seven promises to him.

First, *"I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying"*. *Genesis 28:13*

Esau won't kill Jacob, he was assured. You will become the ruler and heir of the earth. You don't have to fear Esau. You will get

married. You will have children. Children will inherit the land. Definite promises for the future.

Second, *“Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth.” Genesis 28:14f.*

Offspring, generations of numberless offspring! It is clear that no untoward thing will happen to Jacob. Moreover Jacob’s descendants will become heirs to the land before him. Jacob relied on the promise.

Third, *“You will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south,” Genesis 28:14*

Not only this land but also many neighbouring lands will become an inheritance to Jacob and his descendants.

Fourth, *“All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.” Genesis 28:14f*

Jacob and his ensuing generations will be the cause for the blessing of all peoples of the earth.

Fifth, *“I am with you and I will watch over you wherever you go. Genesis 28:15f*

God assures Jacob that he will be with him. Jacob is no longer alone and lonesome. It was such an assurance for someone who thought of himself as an orphan and friendless.

Sixth, *“I will bring you back to this land.” Genesis 28:15f*

A promise to bring him back to his land even if he will have to go away for a while.

Seventh, *“I will not leave you, until I have done what I have promised you.” Genesis 28:15f*

God, who never goes back on His word, faithful in His promises, gives you the assurance that He will never forsake you.

God has said, *“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5f*

Thus the divine provision of God’s love came to Jacob when he was sorely disappointed, tired and exhausted. How fortunate that God’s almighty hands reached for Jacob at this time!

The first experience in the desert was God’s provision for Hagar. **Divine Provision.**

Second, **Divine Care**. The God's love, which cared for Jacob.

Third, **Divine Mission**. Moses getting the revelation of God's love when God sanctified him for great responsibility.

“Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.” Exodus 3:1

God appeared to Moses in the desert, trained him there in the desert, anointed him and prepared him for the deliverance of six hundred thousand people. That was God's love!

Moses would have perished in the River Nile when he was only three months old. As per the Pharaoh's command, all male babies were to be killed. When the baby Moses was born, his parents were amazed at its bright face, for the child was extremely charming. They hid the baby for three months. But when they could not hide it any longer, they got a basket of papyrus and coated it with tar and pitch. Then they placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile.

Isn't Moses' life a wonder? What a wonder that the life, which faced death, now got revived! While there is an order from the palace demanding the massacre of male children Moses is growing up in the same palace under royal protection!

Child of God, review your life. Aren't you a wonder to yourself and for many? Isn't it a wonder you reached so far? You would have lost your life long time back. Nevertheless God has extended your life giving you back your health, in His great love and care. You have experienced the tender love of the eternal Father God. You were given food for eating, clothes for wearing, and a home for resting. What has God not given? Son, what would you have? Be grateful. Be obliged to God. Be a person, who pleases God.

Who would get payment for feeding one's own child? That was what happened to Moses' mother. She was paid by the Royal Palace! Moses grew up into a prince and his mother got salary.

Miriam, the elder sister of that three months baby was six years old at that time. She comes running. She comes crying out of sheer joy. She told her mother:

"Mother, Baby hasn't drowned in the river. The princess drew him out of the water and took him to the palace. I also went behind.

The princess had had no children of her own. Cautiously, I asked her whether I should call any Hebrew women to feed him. And the princess heard that offer and ordered me to call you to the palace. Let us go to the palace at once.”

The child who had been given a last kiss and left to die in the flooding river is now in the hands of the princess! The mother couldn't believe it at first. “My God!” the poor mother exclaimed with a sigh of relief and gratitude.

Moses lived in the palace for forty years and the next forty years in the mountainous deserts of Sinai.

Moses was now eighty years old. When he was leading the flock on the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the Mountain of God, he saw flames of fire from within a bush. What a wonder the bush didn't burn up! Seeing this wonder Moses went near it. God called him from within the fire, “Moses! Moses!” God's call to Moses. God calls man by his name. The Creator God is tenderly.

The LORD said: *“I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying*

out because of their slave drivers and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of the land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey....So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.” Read the book of Exodus 3:6-10.

Divine mission - Divine service. Moses was entrusted with divine mission. God appeared to Moses in the desert and entrusted His glorious task to Moses.

Child of God, are you aware that God is looking at you with great expectation in this desert? Do you understand that God is expecting great things from you? God is calling out to see whether there is anyone willing to do his mission:

“Then I heard the voice of the LORD saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for Us?” This is the call of heaven, to do God’s work. *Isaiah 6:8*

“For I have five brothers. Let Lazarus warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.” *Luke 16:27-28*

This request from Hades is also a call for help.

“Come over to Macedonia and help us.” Acts 16: 9

Dear friend, do you get an urge to do God’s mission, inspired by these calls? Everything will change and disappear. Whatever you do for Christ will remain. That will be the only capital that will enhance the riches in the eternity. Do work for the redemption of souls out of real thirst, burden and with genuine love.

“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field.” Luke 10:2



Chapter - 4

*“The burning sand will become a pool,
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.” Isaiah 35:7*

Experiences in the desert:

One, **Divine Provision** - God's providential care.

Two, **Divine Care** - God's protection.

Three, **Divine Mission** - God's work.

Fourth experiences of the desert - **Divine Ministry**. The factors, which give spiritual strength for God's work.

“In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way of the LORD, Make straight paths for him.’” Matthew 1:1-3

John, the son of Zachariah, the priest, got revelation from God when he was in the desert. He came to Jordan and the nearby places preaching baptism for repentance.

“A voice of one calling in the desert, Prepare the way for the LORD, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth and all mankind will see God’s salvation.” Luke 3:2-6.

It was in the desert that the Word of God for divine ministry was made available for John the Baptist. “Repent”-this message resounded in the desert.

John the Baptist’s ministry was powerful. It was filled with spiritual strength. He spoke the Word in a curt and dry manner, without caring for the person .He even called the crowd who came to him for repentance-baptism as ‘the brood of vipers’.

“You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance..... The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.” Luke 3:7-9

John the Baptist forcefully preached on the coming of judgment. Prepare the way for the LORD to come into human hearts and make straight paths for him-he preached. *'If good fruits were not produced, the trees will be cut down,'* he warned in strict words.

'Repent', 'Prepare your hearts for Christ' -his words were curt and harsh, suggestive of the strength of his divine ministry. Nowadays also such powerful words create transformation in people.

When the crowd heard this powerful message, they asked, *'What should we do then?'* Luke 3:10

Tax collectors also asked, *'What should we do then.'* Then some soldiers asked him, *'What should we do then?'* Luke 3:12-14

On the Pentecost day when Peter spoke in the power of Holy Spirit, the crowd asked the same question.

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, *"Brothers, what shall we do?"* Acts 2:37.

The Word of life, Spirit filled Word will create into human hearts awareness of sin and repentance.

The Word of Truth will lead man towards repentance. For Holy Spirit will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement. John16:8.

John the Baptist witnessed on Jesus Christ.

“John answered them all, ‘I baptize with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Luke 3:16-17.

John the Baptist was not prepared for even a small adjustment, one small compromise, little adjustment, a little softening-if he were prepared for any such attitude, Herod would not have beheaded him.

“When John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and all the other evil things he had

*done, Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison.”
Luke 3:19-20.*

“Now Herod had arrested John, and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philips wife, for John had been saying to him. ‘It is not lawful for you to have her.’ Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they considered him a prophet.” Matthew 14:3-5.

When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him. Herod knew John to be a righteous and holy man. Therefore he feared him and protected him. All these were good. Yet they didn't lead him to repentance. He was not prepared to leave his personal sin.

One can hear the Word without forsaking sin. Word can be spoken too. Respect for God's children and fear may be there.

When they hear the Word they realize them as true word and yet not prepared to renounce sin. As a result they are likely to harm or persecute God's children if they get an opportunity.

Herod killed John, for John reprimanded Herod and spoke the Word; he had to face execution. If only he had diluted, rather softened his word in accusation, the danger could have been

averted. The power of Holy Spirit is essential for proclaiming the Word of God with out caring ones own existence and security. There is always reward in eternity for the ministry with the power of Holy Spirit. Apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Corinth:

“Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the LORD because you know that your labour in the LORD is not in vain.”

Fourth experience of the desert - gives strength and power for **Divine Ministry**.

Fifth experience paved way for **Revelation**.

Apostle Paul received revelation in the desert. He got the divine revelation from his desert experience. Paul had gone into the desert of Arabia for three years, soon after his conversion at the Damascus when he heard Jesus asking him. ‘*Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?*’ Lord Jesus Christ revealed many truths- quintessential to Paul during those days in seclusion. Paul writes about it in the first chapter of Galatians.

“I want you to know, brothers that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any

man, nor was I taught it; rather I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the Church of God and tried to destroy it. I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when God who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before I was but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus.”

Galatians 1:11-17

It was during those lonesome days in the desert that he received all the important revelations from Jesus Christ. He received those insights-quintessential truths from heaven itself.

Paul himself describes in his epistle to Corinthians:

“I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained I will go on to visions and revelations from the LORD. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven-whether it was in the body or out of the body, I do not know - God

knows - was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things that man is not permitted to tell. 2 Cor. 12:1-4

Here is an illustration. There was some work going on in a three-storied building. A worker forgot to take his hammer when he climbed up. He remembered his mistake only when he was about to begin his work. He began to shout at the top of his voice but because of the noise of vehicles he was not heard. Then he noticed a worker coming out of the building. In order to attract his attention he threw a five rupees coin at his head. It fell over his head and fell down. That worker soon took that coin but he didn't see from where the coin came.

Then the man on top took a piece of brick and threw it down that pained his feet. Suddenly he looked up and then the man on top got the chance to ask him to send his hammer up as early as possible. Thus he was able to convey his idea to carry out what he finally planned to do.

He got the coin but didn't look up. When we get blessings from above we too do not look up or thank God. We won't know what messages are sent to us.

Yet when some painful incidents occur in our lives, we look up. Then God is able to convey to us some matters. When we get

the coins of blessings we don't look at God or show our gratitude to him in the midst of our noise and din or busy job schedules. Nevertheless the drought condition of difficulties threw us back to God who gave us solutions from all problems.

Respected child of God, are you in the parched condition of a desert? Are you lonely? Are you experiencing pain and suffering? If so, do believe in God. God can grant you some revelations. You can attain them if you fulfil God's will. So please take a firm decision to lead a life that will please God.



Chapter - 5

*“Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert;
as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.” John 6:31*

*“They spoke against God, saying, “Can God spread a table
in the desert?”*

*When he struck the rock, Water gushed out and streams flowed
abundantly.*

*But can he also give us food? Can he supply meat for his
people?” Psalm 78:19-20*

Divine Food - Divine Feeding

Having started from Egypt, Israelites were travelling through the desert - Red-hot sandy desert-weary of thirst-parched of hunger. How much food will suffice for six hundred thousand people? Where is food? Where is water? They started without thinking of these prospects. Indeed, Moses got revelation from God. The people believed it; they started.

For a time, no thought of anxiety troubled them on their journey. But when they began to feel weariness due to lack of food and water, they murmured against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them,

“If only we had died in Egypt. There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve the entire assembly to death.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.” Exod.16:3-5

Each morning when the people come out of their tents, they find a layer of manna all over their yards and they picked it up. All over the desert patches around the camp, this flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. Each one gathered as much as he needed.

“The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey.”
Exod. 16:31

Psalmist describes manna in this way, *“They ate the bread of angels.” Psalm 78:25*

“He sent them all the food they could eat.” thus continues the reading. *“He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you.”* We read thus in Deut. 8:16

Based on this specific matter we can ponder over two meanings. First, the LORD gives food to all those who faint with hunger and thirst; he remedies each one’s needs.

An event was heard. There was a starving kid who had no means to live. He had never eaten any good meal. He was lying on the footpath weary and tired. He was merely skin and bones to look at.

Somebody took pity on him and carried him to the hospital. Sisters at the hospital washed him, bathed him and gave him good dress besides giving him supper to his full. There was one glass of milk in his meals. When the boy saw milk his eyes sparkled. He asked the sisters, “Can I drink it full?” It was a heart-rending question to the sisters.

How many kids go without proper food? That boy knows he won't get such food once he goes back home!

After the Second World War the kids captured by the winning party were leading their lives in sorrow and despair. They were very disappointed. They were given food; yet they were restless. How to make them happy and active was a question discussed with a psychologist.

He answered:

Let them hold a piece of bread every night they go to sleep. The assurance that there is food for the next day will give them peace in their hearts. God who fed Israelites by raining manna in their yards, His children are in His great care as in the past.

There was a missionary named Wang who worked for a long time in China. I happened to read the story of this man. He lived with his wife in a mud cottage. When there arose a persecution against missionaries, Wang couldn't go out in public to get food. Cleaners brought food items to him.

One day there was no firewood for them to cook. The missionary and his wife prayed for some time. Then they got out to

find, to their surprise some broken twigs fallen out of a crow-nest. They were happy because the LORD had sent firewood necessary for cooking. They thanked God for His mercy and cooked their food.

This is not a small matter. Our heavenly father, who is the Eternal Love, provides for us. God, who fed His servant Elijah by means of a crow, is our God. One thing is certain. God will feed His children with food.

Psalmist said: *"I was young and now I am old, Yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread."* Psalm 37:25

"The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing." Psalm 34:10

What a great comfort to think that God provides for us during this life, that is the desert journey.

Manna denotes spiritual food. Manna is Christ's symbolic presence. Christ said, *"I am the bread of life. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to this world."* John 6:33

"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." John 6:35

Jesus Christ is the heavenly bread, which is made out the Golgotha mill, finely ground and mixed with His sacred blood.

Christ's flesh and sacred blood are Holy things for the holy people.

Jesus said to them, *"I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him at the last day." John 6:53-54*

Jesus Christ continued:

"For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." John 6:55-58

On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" John 6:60 (NIV)

“This is very hard to understand. Who can tell what He means.” (Living Bible)

Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” John 6:52

Seeing the reactions of both Jews and disciples, Jesus explained:

“The Spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and they are life.” John 6:63

Child of God believes that Jesus Christ's dying on the cross, his sacred body being torn into pieces, his sacred blood being poured forth are for the atonement of his sin and to give him eternal life. He accepts the word of God and begins a sinless life, a (new) holy life according to the Word of God. Then accepts the holy body and holy blood as the visible good deed of the invisible goodness that is in Christ. Therefore our bodies are transformed into Christ's body. Christ's blood flows through our veins. This is to be done in holy faith. It is not enough to know him by intellect. The Word of God is heard. Word is believed-Word is received. 'Live' as per the Word. The people of this commitment receive the holy flesh and blood, and imbibe the spirit.

“Holy things for Holy people.”

Response to this priest’s assertion is uttered soon:

“Holy is the one Father, holy is the one Son and holy is the one Spirit.” (It means that I am a sinner and I don’t deserve to receive these holy things).

“Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.”

Each one in the congregation responds to this praise:

“One from the beginning and for ever and ever. Amen.”

Then comes the consoling words from the Priest:

“The one Holy Father, who created the world in His mercy, is with us.” (The world was created mercifully by the one Holy Father)

“The one Holy Son, who saved it by His precious passion, is with us.” (Saved by precious passions)

“The one living Holy Spirit, who perfects and fulfils all that is and that has been, is with us. May the name of the LORD be blessed as in the beginning both now and for ever.”

What we should do to experience this is instructed in the scripture (Word of God.)

“A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the LORD eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick and a number of you have fallen asleep.” 1 Cor. 11:28-30

That one should take the bread of life in order to attain the Spirit, only if one confesses and renounces one’s sin and decides not to repeat the same. New wine shouldn’t be poured forth in old skin.

Honourable (respectable) friend! Is your personality a new skin? Is your life holy? Is your heart filled with love of the Calvary Cross? Do you desire to live with this mind of Christ, heart of Christ, and the image of Christ?

If so, you will also attain spirit-body and fly high when Christ’s second coming occurs. You will reign with him, in eternity, with your beloved bridegroom, in his bridal chamber.



Chapter - 6

*“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert,
so the Son of Man must be lifted up,
that everyone who believes in him
may have eternal life.” John 3:14-15*

Sixth experience of the deserts: **Divine feeding** - Divine meal.

Seventh experience of the desert: **Divine healing** - Divine cure.

Israelites were wandering through the wilderness. The people got mentally tired, due to the strain on the way. They spoke against God and against Moses.

“They travelled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses and said, “Why have you

brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"

Numbers 21:4-5

When the crowd thus murmured and quarrelled within the camp, there came venomous snakes among them; they bit the people in the tents in the camp and many Israelites died.

Then the people expressed repentance and sorrow. They told Moses:

"We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people. Numbers 21:6-7

The LORD said to Moses, *"Make a snake and put it up on a pole, anyone who is bitten can look at it and live."* So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. When anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived. (Numbers 21:8-9)

Moses sent this message across the camp.

Some who were a little educated (let me say it according to my imagination) and had a little scientific knowledge laughed at Moses. "Moses doesn't have any scientific knowledge. Will not the poison of the snake affect all internal organs and human cells?",

they asked. "What is the use of looking at the bronze snake on the pole, when the blood infected with the poison had already covered the whole body?" they reasoned.

They sat there claiming scientific knowledge and reasoning. The poison in their bodies began to act and they were about to lose consciousness. At that time, lo, a person comes running. "Friend, don't die! Just look at that bronze snake! You will live."

Again the poison-affected person argued, "How can poison in my body be taken off by merely looking at the bronze snake on the pole?"

"My friend, don't argue, don't waste time. I too was a poison-affected person. I looked at it once. The poison was gone. I am completely cured."

Isn't that experience genuine? More powerful than words! More natural than a speech! That man looked up. The tiredness was gone. Energy and vigour came back.

He also ran to the next tent. He told all those who were about to die to look at the bronze snake. Whoever looked at it got cured. Divine Healing - divine cure.

Killing the snakes or administering medicines was not the solution to the problem. It was no solution to tell the people that there were no snakes or that they won't be bitten; it was no use formulating and declaring anti-snake laws or trying to adopt preventive measures like climbing trees or poles or raising slogans against the snakes. On the contrary looking at the raised bronze snake on the pole was the only solution.

On 6th January 1850, there occurred a strong hailstorm at Colchester in England. That snowfall was so severe that it was difficult for anyone to travel across the snow-laden roads. There was a young man who was in the habit of going to a particular church there but was hindered on the way due to the storm. He saw an old Methodist chapel nearby and he entered there. Since the church minister couldn't reach the place that day a simple layman did that ministry in his place. He took Isaiah 45:22 as his reading for the speech:

“Look unto me and be ye saved; all the ends of this earth.”

This young man had been restless for some months and troubled by his conscience. Though his father and grandfather were ministers of the Church, he hadn't yet got the assurance of salvation.

That speaker, who was not educated or trained, did not speak much on the basis of the reading on Isaiah 45:22. He didn't know how to elaborate on the Word. He simply repeated the verse.

“Look unto me and be ye saved; all the ends of the earth.”

He said, “There is no need for special education to do this. You don't have to go to college. You don't need special training. You don't need wisdom to look to God.”

Then he loudly repeated the words, “Anyone can look; even a small child can look. Then he pointed towards the young man and said, “Dear young man, you are worried and sad. Dear friend, look to Jesus.”

That moment the young man looked at Christ in faith. This young man was Charles Haddon Spurgeon, who was later known as the ‘Prince of Preachers’.

The Word of God says:

*“Those who look to Him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.” Psalm 34:5*

When Jesus said, *“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of man must be lifted up, that every one who believes in him may have eternal life”* (John 3:15), Nicodemus, one of the ruling members of the Pharisees, and one of the prominent members of the Supreme Synod, couldn't comprehend it. Even though Nicodemus couldn't understand then that Christ shall be crucified and that whoever looks at the crucified Christ shall be saved, he accepted it when he saw Jesus crucified.

From the first verse of the third chapter of St. John up to the twenty-first verse of the chapter, we see Nicodemus in the midnight of confusion. Nevertheless when he saw Jesus being crucified at Calvary (John 19:38-42) he came out into the sunlight of confession.

Friend, look at Jesus Christ. If you look at him, your confusion will give way to blessed experience of confession. Nicodemus didn't understand for three and a half years but he didn't question him. He didn't challenge him. He didn't laugh at him. The seed of Word, which was sown into his heart germinated in time. That is why he got ready for public witnessing. He joined with Joseph of Arimathea for the funeral of the sacred body of Jesus.

Anyone can get this transformation. Anyone can attain this great blessing. How many who looked at the crucified Christ got new life in the history of the last two thousand years! How many hearts got comfort! How many families got prosperity due to love and peace that obtained in the new found path! How many people who were once overwhelmed by despair and darkened future, got peace!

“They looked unto Him and were radiant and their faces were not ashamed.” Psalm 34:5

How many patients got healing (well)! How many lives beset by mental illness got solace!

Friend, look at this bronze snake.

See, Christ is standing near you, and He is willing to revive you from the torment of Satan’s poison. For you were spiritually dead when you were stung with sin!

“The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law.” 1 Cor. 15:56

We read in the epistle of James:

“Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin when it is full grown, gives birth to death.” James 1:15

One who is spiritually dead needs life. *“That Christ has come that he may have life and has it to the full.” John 10:10*

“There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood: He did this to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.” Rom. 3:23-25

The bronze snake on the pole set in the middle of the camp is the LORD Jesus Christ. Bronze snake is a shadow, a symbol. Christ is the perfect one. Christ is the reality. Instead of seeing Christ, if one depends on the bronze snake alone that will become an act of idolatry.

There are many groups of idolators. They are known as ‘cults’. ‘Hero-worship’ actually is an idolatrous worship. Metal idols are also there.

Mental idols also come into this category. There is a group named **Viduthal group** (freedom group) in some parts of Kerala. These cult groups extricate the poor believer from Christ and force them to worship a woman who claims to be Christ. By God's grace, I am one of the many, who got delivered out of the bitter and deadly influence of this cult. How many are still entangled in this idolatrous act of worshipping a woman as Christ!

Bronze snake later became an idol. During the time of Hezekiah, the King of Judah, this was destroyed. 2 Kings 18:3-4

Respected friend, do you thirst for divine healing out of the experiences of the desert? God can grant you this divine strength and give you eternal well being. You look at Christ. Trust in Jesus Christ.



Chapter - 7

Those varied experiences of the desert make happiness and grant consolation in to the life of a believer.

One - **Divine Provision** - Divine Precaution

Two - **Divine Care** - Divine Protection

Three-**Divine Mission** - Thirsty for God's work

Four - **Divine Ministry** - Holy Service

Five - **Divine Revelation** - Divine Disclosure

Six - **Divine Feeding** - Divine Food - Word of God

Seven - **Divine Healing** – Divine Cure

Eight - **Divine Guidance** - Divine Leading

Nine - **Divine Victory** - Divine Success

“Please do not leave us. You know where we should camp in the desert” Numbers 10:31f

“So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and travelled for three days. The Ark of the Covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to rest”. Numbers 10:33

For Israelites, the Ark of Covenant was there in the desert. There was also the Tabernacle of Testimony. Stephen in his speech says,

“Our forefathers had the Tabernacle of the Testimony with them in the desert. It had been made as God directed Moses, according to the pattern he had seen”. Acts. 7:44.

God had told Moses all about the making of the Tabernacle in detail when he was on the Mount Sinai:

“Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you”. Exodus 25:8-9

There are thirteen chapters in the Word of God describing the sanctuary. Besides this there are descriptions in the New Testament on the tabernacle and its instruments. Curtain, mercy seat, atonement, revival-baptism, priest, chief priest, redemption, intercession, Lamb of God, washing, purifying, cleansing, reconciliation, sacrifice, atonement, bloodshed, bearing sin and many other words related to the tabernacle .

There are three spiritual meanings for the Tabernacle

One – Heavenly Tent

Two – Lord Jesus Christ

Three – Church of Christ

The Tabernacle is the 'Tabernacle of the Testimony' in the desert. (Acts. 7:44)

That was the place of worship in the desert journey. That was the place from where God used to speak to his people. (Exodus 25: 21-22)

It was placed in the centre of the Israelite camp. Levites, the priestly tribe of the Israelites, encamped around it. (Numbers 1:50)

The Tabernacle of the Testimony had within it a Chest to keep the tablets of Ten Commandments. (Deuteronomy 10:2-5)

It was in the Tabernacle of the Testimony where the Levites performed sacrifices. There was an Altar in the outer sanctuary. Sacrifices were performed on it.

Then there were the bronze altar, bronze basin, the table for the bread of the Presence, the lamp stand, the golden altar of incense, the ark of the Testimony, atonement cover (mercy seat). Out of these seven things the ark is the foremost mentioned object.

There are other names for the Ark of testimony in the Bible.

One: The Ark of Testimony (Exodus 25:22)

Two: The Ark of the Covenant (Numbers 10:33; Hebrews 9:4; Revelation 11:19)

Three: The Ark of the sovereign LORD (1Kings 2:26)

Four: The ark of the covenant of the LORD of all the earth (Joshua 3:13)

Five: The Ark of God (1 Samuel 3:3)

Six: The sacred Ark (2 Chronicles 35:3)

Seven: The Ark of your might (Psalms 132:8)

Eight: The Ark of His might (Psalms 78:61)

Nine: The Ark of His Splendour (Psalms 78:61).

We read in the New Testament the following details about the Ark of the Covenant:

“Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered Ark of the Covenant. This Ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron’s staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the Ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover.” Hebrews 9:3-5

The Ark of the Covenant is synonymous of the presence of the LORD God. The Ark of the Covenant led the people across the land of Canaan. Israelites crossed the Red sea under the Cloud. The Ark helped them to cross the Jordan River. The Cloud symbolizes the presence of God. As soon as the priests who carried the Ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water’s edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. (Joshua 3:15)

The Ark of the Covenant, i.e. the Ark of the Testimony symbolizes Christ. Christ, the Ark, got into the great flood for our sake. The river, which caused Christ's death, became a firm and dry place for us.

Red sea symbolized Christ's death for us. Jordan symbolizes our death with Christ. The death of Christ, i.e., the Red sea reveals our redemption. Death with Christ, that is Jordan, shows our entry to the heavenly abodes.

Apostle Paul describes death along with Christ in three ways:

One: Death of self – **Self**

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." - Galatians 2:20

Two: Death of body - **Sex**

"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires." - Galatians 5:24

Third: Death of world – **World**

“The world has been crucified to me and I to the world.” -
Galatians 6:14

The last part of the fourth chapter in the Epistle to Romans symbolizes the experience of the Red Sea and the first part of the fifth chapter symbolizes the experience of Jordan.

“But also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness-for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.” Romans 4:24:25

“Therefore since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our LORD Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.” - Romans 5:1-2

The priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant went ahead of the people in Jordan. But when they had crossed the river Jordan, entered the Promised Land and began to circle the city of Jericho, the Ark of the Covenant came to the centre. The armed soldiers went ahead; the people behind them, the Ark in

the middle, the priests and the trumpeters behind them. This was the order in which they encircled Jericho. (Joshua 6:12-13)

We read about the Ark in the book of Joshua chapter 8:30 to 35. We read about this Ark in the first book of Samuel chapter four.

We read about the victory of Israel from Joshua's Book and their failure from the book of Judges. The reason for failure is the loss of the Ark, which means loss of the sense of the presence of God by the people.

The loss of the Ark of the Covenant, the visual, presence of God caused the death of Eli, the chief priest and his children, and the failure of Israelites. We read about all these events in the fourth chapter of the first book of Samuel; the failure of Israel, the death of Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's death by a broken neck from a fall from his chair, Phinehas' wife's death on child birth.

"The glory has departed from Israel." So saying, Phinehas' wife died in great despair. Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas ignored God's commandment and defiled the Most Holy Place. The word Hophni meant 'obstinate' and Phinehas meant 'babbler'. Aggression, corruption, adultery, wickedness were their character traits. They had seen the Ark only as an object. They did not understand the

presence of God symbolized by the Ark. Therefore, the glory departed from Israel. (1Sam. 4:21-22)

The Psalmist says about it:

*“He sent the ark of his might into captivity,
his splendour into the hands of the enemy. Psalm 78:61.*

The Ark, which was the blessing for Israelites became a curse for Philistines as long as they kept it along with them. (1Sam. Ch.6)

Because the people of Bethshemesh looked into the Ark, about fifty thousand and seventy people died. This sacred Ark was kept at Khir-et Jarem for the next twenty years. Later David brought it to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:12-17; 1Chr. 15)

After bringing the Ark, David kept it in a tent specially prepared for it. (2 Samuel 6:17)

When King Solomon built the temple, the Ark was kept in the Temple.

“The priests then brought the Ark of the Lord’s covenant to its place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim.” (1King 8:6)

This Ark of the Covenant is the antecedence of Christ, shadow of Christ, the leading light in the desert journey. It indicates the counselling of God’s Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ will dwell with us in person and guide us. He will make clear all the paths in advance and prepare for us dwelling places in Heaven.

*“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you and watch over you.” - Psalm 32:8*

*“You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will take me into glory” - Psalm 73:24*

*“Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear
a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it“ Isaiah 30: 21*

How beautiful are the LORD’s counsels and his leading in this desert journey! We are not all alone. We are not lonely. We have an advisor. We have a leader. We have a manager. We have a master. We can run to the foot of His cross. We can rely on His

sacred blood. We can experience the cleansing effect of his sacred blood. We can appropriate His holiness. We can humble ourselves to His sacred guidance.



Chapter - 8

“Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” Hebrews 2:18

“Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.” Mathew 4:1

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert where for forty days

He was tempted by the devil.” Luke 4:1

“Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit.” Luke 4:14f

There is trial in the desert. There is the devil's testing in the desert. Jesus passed the test. Those who are joined with Jesus will have success - Victory in the desert. This is the **Divine Victory**.

The Second Adam faced the same tests that the First Adam had faced. The First Adam failed and Satan won. The Second Adam achieved victory in the test and Satan failed.

It is we who have to decide whether Satan should win or fail. If we fail, Satan will win. We can succeed, if we have the firm determination not to allow Satan to win.

Satan came to the first man testing him in three matters. Satan showed the man forbidden fruit and instilled in him evil desire.

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it.” Genesis 3:6

First, good for eating - **Lust of the flesh** - The cravings of sinful man.

Secondly, pleasing to the eye - **Lust of the eye**.

Thirdly, good for gaining wisdom - **Boasting of what he has and does** – pompousness.

The Word of God says:

“For everything in the world - the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does - comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its

desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.” 1John 2:16-17

These are the three desires, which separate man from God and cause him to come under Satan’s slavery.

“Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full- grown, gives birth to death.” James 1:15

Apostle James gives a reason for this situation:

“But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.” James 1:14f

It is important to note what psychologists say about these situations.

Freud says: “What man needs is sexual pleasure”.

Adler says: “What man needs is power”.

Jung says: “What man needs is knowledge”.

We can summarize these words.

First: **Sex – Girl**
Second: **Self – Glory**
Third: **Silver – Gold**

Pascal, the famous philosopher and theologian says:

“The three ways by which man runs away from God are these.”

Christ died on the cross in order to get rid of the influence of the flesh and the world upon man. The sex between husband and wife is not sin, when it is conducted in the proper direction. What a man feels towards his wife or a wife towards her husband, in the matters of sexual desires and activities are signs of their love epitomized. When desire extends towards other bodies outside the wedlock, it becomes sin.

Apostle Paul writes about this to Corinthians, in his first epistle:

“But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfil his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife’s body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband’s body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive

each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourself to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you, because of your lack of self-control.” 1

Corinthians 7:2-5

Living Bible says:

“Usually it is best to be married, each man having his own wife and each woman having her own husband, because otherwise you might fall back into sin. The man should give his wife all that is her right as a married woman, and the wife should do the same for her husband.”

Sex is a blessing given to man by God. It becomes a sin when it is misused or misdirected. In the same way, the self is manifested in the lust of the eye and the pride of life. We can also see worldliness in it. The successful life is the one in which one controls and overcomes these desires - victorious living.

Victorious living as per the Word of God is:

“For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die, but if by the Spirit, you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.” Romans 8:13

The First Adam failed in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the boastful pride of life. The Second Adam overcame all

these. Christ was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. When Jesus got hungry, Satan came near Him. The tempter said, "If you are the Son of God tell these stones to become bread." (Matthew: 4:3)

Jesus quoted the scripture and faced the temptation of Satan.

"Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4, Deuteronomy 8:3

When Satan realized that it was not possible to defeat Jesus through the lust of the flesh he came to test Jesus through the lust of the eye.

"The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendour, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours." Luke 4:5-7

Jesus confronted the devil by means of the Word of God.

"Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" Luke 4:8

“Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name.” Deuteronomy 6:13

When the devil got defeated in the second test also, he came out with the third test - the lust of power. Since the Lord Jesus countered him in the previous two tests by taking the Word of God, the devil also took the Word of God. Yes, the devil may quote the Word of God. How many are there who quote scripture and speak the Word of God in order to get selfish gain! Actually they work as agents of the devil without knowing it.

“The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down from here.’” Luke 4:9

“For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” Luke 4:10-11

Jesus Christ overcame this test also by the Word of God.

“Jesus answered, ‘It says: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Luke 4:12.

It was by means of the Word of God that the Lord overcame the temptations of the tempter. The devil had quoted the Word from Psalm 91 verses 11 and 12. In all these three tests, the devil had

attacked the three basic qualities in Christian life, that is, **faith**, **hope** and **love**.

When Jesus was hungry, Satan's proposal to command the stones to become bread was actually challenging the love of God.

The second test for Christ, who was ready to receive the Cross with a joyful mind, was the proposal: "If you will bow down and worship me, all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour will be given to you". It was Christ's hope in God that Satan attacked, for Christ had determined in his heart to embrace the cross with a smile.

It was God's faithfulness that Satan questioned in the third test. When Jesus was told to jump from the top of the temple, the devil was casting doubt on God's promise that the angels would bear him up. In this test also, the devil couldn't shake Jesus' faith in His Father God.

The fact that Satan couldn't destroy Christ's love for His Father, his faith and hope in God the Father, is the Second Adam's victory. The failure of the First Adam was that all these—faith, hope and love—were lost.

The First Adam was tempted in the beautiful Garden of Eden and failed. The Second Adam was tempted in the wild, terrible desert and he emerged victorious.

Dear Child of God, won't you rely on Christ Jesus? *"Because He Himself suffered when he was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted."* When trials come, will you persevere and plead for Christ's mercy?

In all these tests brought by the devil, there is a challenge: *"If you are the Son of God."* Luke 4:3

If you are the Son of God, why should you remain hungry? Can't you turn these stones into bread? There is an inducement to adulterate spirituality with materiality. But Jesus never used his divine and spiritual power for self-gain.

Apostle Paul warns through his epistle to Timothy that godliness should not be a means of financial gain. 1Tim. 6:5-6.

Jesus Christ shows through his desert experience-**Divine victory**. We will succeed in the fight with the devil only if we are rooted and grounded in the Word of God.

Dear friend, haven't you experienced failures so far in your life? Don't you want to lead a victorious life now? Don't you want to experience the victorious Christian life with all its comfort, joy and

peace? If you want you can surrender your future life at the foot of the merciful Christ's Cross. Then, experience the redemption through the sacred blood of Christ and sanctification and live the life of a new creation.

"Praise be to God who gives us victory through the Lord Jesus."



Chapter - 9

Marah becomes sweet

Exodus 15:22-25 says:

“Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they travelled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah) So the people grumbled against Moses saying, “What are we to drink?” Then Moses cried out to the LORD God and the LORD showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into water and the water became sweet.”

The Israelites had journeyed through the heat and drought conditions of the desert. The people continue their journey with the fierce sun over their heads and lashed by the unbearably hot waves of the desert storms. They reached the desert of Shur. They suffered without getting a drop of water there for three days and they began to feel the agony out of thirst and weariness. Then they began to murmur and feel despair. They wondered how they could continue

this journey. They became perplexed. When the hot, stormy winds raged against their bodies, they felt the roasted sand-particles piercing their bodies like firebrands. The terrible sun rays beat down upon their heads. Their heads stoop down due to the heat. They are growing weary and exhausted. Bearing the heat of the sun they had already become weak. Their bodies sway. They became distressed. They became panicky not knowing how to go on. The people were worried. When they were thus journeying onwards, suffering these hellish torments, they suddenly got a vision. What is it? They saw ripples of water from afar. There was plenty of water. Here is a stream in the desert.

They saw plenty of water forming sweeping waves in quick motion. The thirsty crowd rushed to the stream in great anticipation. They drank the water with hollowed palms in great haste and urge. Alas! The water they drew into their hollowed palms tasted bitter and they couldn't swallow that water, as it tasted very bitter the moment it touched the tongue. The water that they got at Marah was extremely bitter.

Brothers and sisters, will I get a resting place after days of misery and affliction? Will I get a resting place? Will I get comfort? Will I get peace? Some people who experience such wanderings in thought get a quenching feeling of comfort, peace and quietude

similar to that of the experience of those thirsty wanderers in the desert on getting water.

However, when you come near to the fulfilment of such make-believe goodness, it turns out to be evil and bitter. What you have considered good will turn out to be bad. When the thirsty and weary crowd was about to drink the water, they came to know that the water was bitter. They couldn't swallow a drop of water without spitting it out.

Dear one, when you read these words, would you think for a moment? Sometimes you must have pined for getting some good things in life, which must have turned into painful matters. Do such people hear these words? You must have entered into the married life with great expectations. A girl, who didn't get love and affection at her home, naturally expected much from a good husband. With great longing and expectation, with sweet dreams she entered into the married life. Before long, she came to know that her husband was a mental patient. Always doubting wife; always scolding wife; doubt grips his mind and thinking process in such a way that he cannot think sensibly. Both day and night he has only painful words to say to his wife and wounding her heart with his crude behaviour. Alas! What you got with pain and suffering has now turned sour and bitter like that of Marah.

After marriage, there was great expectation and longing for a darling baby to love it and watch its tender movements. Her desire for seeing a baby got fulfilled when she became pregnant. She had dreams and lovely hopes to bring up that baby. When the child was born there was great jubilation. Months passed by. The child doesn't turn on its belly. Again months passed by. The child does not turn to one side or the other. It lies in the same position that it is laid down. When food is fed, it will have it. The child became one year old. It makes no effort to sit up. It makes no effort to crawl. Now it is two years and still the child doesn't get up. The child became three years old, four years old, five years old and still the child is bedridden. Years rolled by. Now at the age of fifteen and sixteen, there is no attempt to get up or smile. Sometimes there was some noise gurgling from the throat. It was painful to look at the child. Bitter waters of Marah!

Hopes are shattered. No more desires left. The business was started with great expectations. What a unity among partners! What a bond! How prosperous it was! What heights it achieved! All the miseries in life were going to be wiped out. All the debts were going to be paid off. Business was soaring. Every thing was fine but it did not last long. The business partners started quarrelling each other. Their difference of opinions made them drift apart. Their bickering and infighting caused heavy losses. Debts increased beyond control. Bitter waters of Marah!

They thought they had achieved something good for drinking but later they understood that it was neither fit nor good for drinking. Dear ones remember what Moses did in that situation! He cried out to God. "Although we got water at Marah, the water is bitter, O Lord." God's servant wept not knowing what to do.

Prayer to God is the solution to all our problems. Moses cried out. God showed Moses a tree. Moses cut the tree and put the pieces into the water. As soon as the cut pieces of the tree touched the water, the tree absorbed the poison and the bitterness in the water. In its place, the sweet juice of the tree got transferred into the water. What a wonder! The water became sweet!

Dear friends, do you believe that God can transform the bitter experiences of your life into sweet ones? The Living God can give you sweetness. He can remove the bitterness from your life. He can put an end to the afflictions in your life. All the difficulties and problems will have a solution. Here the bitter waters of Marah become sweet.

The tree was actually very near to the water. There was no need to go far. There was no need for travelling a long distance. You don't have to go far on a pilgrimage to get that tree. That tree was very close by. That tree was symbolic of the wooden cross which centuries later, was erected at Golgotha.

See, this tree symbolizes Jesus Christ whose side was pierced, causing blood and water to flow, whose back was lashed, upon whose head a crown of thorns was placed, whose face was smeared with spit and cheeks reddened by slaps-such was the form of a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. That was the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ who took upon himself the greatest suffering with joy and the severest affliction with happiness.

When that precious blood of Christ gets transferred into our lives all the bitterness in our lives will be changed into sweetness. Christ will take upon Himself all our sin. Christ will take upon Himself all our curses. Christ will comfort us. Christ will give us peace. Christ will console us. Christ will bless us. Receive Christ now. Tell Him your decision. Streams in the desert!

The Living Christ, who changes the bitterness of the Marah of the desert in to sweetness of life, is near you. Do pray to Him. LORD, please change my bitter experiences into sweet happenings. Remove my sin and curse and give me a renewed peaceful life. Today onwards I'll live for you. Give your promise to Him.

May God bless you!



Chapter - 10

1. Divine Provision
2. Divine Care
3. Divine Mission
4. Divine Ministry
5. Divine Revelation
6. Divine Feeding
7. Divine Healing
8. Divine Guidance
9. Divine Victory
10. Divine Sweetness
11. Divine Shelter

In the fifth verse, eighth chapter of the book of Song of Songs, it is written:

“Who is this coming up from the desert leaning on her lover?”

There is the lover’s bosom to lean on in the desert. There is the lover to give shade in the desert. There is Jesus to give you peace, quietude, coolness and consolation in the desert. This life is a desert journey.

Brothers and sisters, aren’t you all leading your life journey in a tired and perturbed manner? Don’t you all live today a life of discouragement, constantly afflicted, perturbed by problems, worried in life, exhausted of carrying burdens, grief-stricken, complaining of life? How many adversities, how many ordeals, what all sorrows and agonies affect individuals! Each man is a fireball. There is fire burning inside. There is fire burning inside like smouldering husk. Pain-affected, shaken with affliction and grief stricken, human life is exhausted. How many lives are grieved without peace!

The journey through the desert, the journey of the desert, the journey of thirst and weariness, the journey under burning heat and sun, the ordeal-filled journey. The journey in the desert is without shade or coolness. There is no tree to give shade in the

journey. This journey through the desert is very painful. Hot winds blow. In the heat waves when the blistering sands of the desert beat against the body, the whole body gets completely exhausted under the burning sun. There is no highway in the desert. Journey through the sands of the desert is painful for the legs. The roasting sands torment the body as the blazing fire dehydrates the body. The desert journey is painful.

Dear friends, are you not living this desert journey in wearisome tiredness, difficulty, weighed down by burdens, anxiety, confusion, perplexity and hence leading a fearful life? However remember this. You have your dear friend to lean on in this desert journey. The Word of God says in verse five, chapter eight of the Song of Songs:

“Who is this coming up from the desert leaning on her lover?”

This virgin dedicates her life lovingly to her beloved and worships him. That is symbolic of Church and symbolic of each believer also. The virgin is symbolic of each true believer. That is the virgin who dedicated her life to her shepherd.

The virgin in the Song of Songs is the one who dedicated her life and gave herself for the young shepherd. Who is this ‘young shepherd’? He is the LORD Jesus Christ who is the Good shepherd, the Great shepherd and the Chief shepherd.

Jesus Christ is the Good shepherd, Jesus Christ is the Great Shepherd and Jesus Christ is the Chief Shepherd.

Dear fellow-believers, Jesus Christ is seen as the Good Shepherd in Psalm 22 while He is seen as the Great Shepherd in Psalm 23. We see Him as the Chief Shepherd in Psalm 24. The Good Shepherd gives up His life for His sheep. That is the crucifixion of Jesus.

The Great Shepherd resurrected and lives. This is the treasured experience born of the loftiest love of Christ, the Great Shepherd and the Resurrected living LORD. Jesus Christ will reappear as the Chief Shepherd. He will come again. The Second Advent of Jesus Christ is an assured fact.

Jesus Christ died as a Prophet – Good Shepherd. He lives as the Chief Priest- the Great Shepherd. Jesus Christ will come majestically as the King – Chief Shepherd. Shepherd is the symbol of LORD Jesus. Shepherd is the shadow of Jesus Christ.

The shepherd of the Song of Songs is Jesus Christ's symbol. Dear friends, Jesus Christ gave up his life for us and He intercedes for us even today before the Father on account of His sacred blood. Jesus Christ will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are waiting for Him. That He will

appear again is stated in the ninth chapter of Hebrews. He is the same Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the Sheep.

I have heard a story. The great poet Tagore had written a poem. There is a beautiful illustration in this poem. There was a poor beggar who was seeking alms. Many were putting rice, coins, wafers, biscuits etc., in his bowl as alms. At that moment there was great commotion. When he looked, he saw the king coming in procession in a chariot. He jumped up from his seat and stretched forth his begging bowl. The king alighted. What a wonder! The king came near to him. He expected the king to give him something substantial. He stretched forth his begging bowl once again. But the king didn't put anything in it. On the contrary the king stretched forth both his hands. The king was not withdrawing his hands and the beggar didn't pull back his bowl either. It remained the same way for sometime. Finally, the beggar got courage and he put his hand into his bowl and two specks of rice got into his hands. He placed it into the King's hands. Two specks of rice! The king folded back his hands and smiled at him. The King mounted the chariot and went away.

In the evening he came back to his small hut. He shook his begging bowl down. There is rice, coins. He separated every little thing. There are biscuits and wafer pieces. He divided them all. Then he saw two shining objects. Shining light! Miraculous brilliance! What

is this? It looks like rice. Yet they are not rice. Dazzling light! What could be this?

He called his acquaintances. People said, 'You are a fortunate man. Do you know what it is?'

'No.'

'They are lakhs worth two gems. Gems! From where did you get them?'

'I don't know.'

'When the king came and stood before me I gave two specks of rice. I don't know whether it was indiscretion on my part. Extremely fearful, I placed two small grains in his hands. Yes, these gems do look like them. Now I do have them in my begging bowl.'

Shrewd people said, "See, you could have given all the things in the begging bowl."

This may be an imaginary story. This is a poem. Nevertheless the theme is so clear.

LORD Jesus Christ is standing before us. He is stretching forth His hands. Do we have the mind to place this insignificant

life- these two small grains in His hands? Do you wish to give this insignificant life of ours in the Creator's hands? Jesus will surely accept you. Jesus will sanctify it. Jesus will bless it. Jesus will increase it. He will turn it into nourishments for many. Son, if you give your life to Jesus, your future into His nail-scarred hands, your life will become bright. It will be a prosperous and shining life. Your future will become luminous. Your life will attain new heights. Your future will become meaningful. Your life will have values. Your life will be blessed, gratified and abundantly prosperous. Dear child of God, kindly place yourself in the hands of the LORD.

That virgin had wisely dedicated her life to her beloved shepherd. It was fortunate. It was an achievement in the desert journey. She had her beloved to lean on, to give her consolation and happiness. She received comfort, consolation, relief and peace. She got her beloved to give her consolation amidst her difficult stay in the desert.

Dear child of God haven't you got familiar with Jesus who gives consolation. Have you received Him in your heart? Jesus will console you. He will cleanse you of sin and bless you. Jesus will wash your sins away. The blood of Jesus, the guiltless blood will wash you and Jesus will take your sins and wash away. Jesus has borne your sin.

Dear Child of God, please accept Him. Please open your heart for Him. Please give Him a word. Oh Lord who died for me I am your own from today onwards. You speak to Jesus. Your life is safe in His hands. You lean on Jesus' bosom. Entrust your life in His nail-scarred hands. You lean on the His sacred heart pierced open by the spear. You imbibe the heartbeats of the Master and get transfused in His love. You run for Him and you be a witness for Him. Welcome Him. Lo! His coming is near. Prepare yourself for His coming. Dedicate your life to Him. May God bless you!



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