



MAR THOMA

MESSENGER

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APRIL 1993



Our Church Life - *Adults*

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FROM THE EDITOR

As we deal with the theme 'Our Church Life- Adults' in the current issue of the *Messenger*, it would, perhaps, help us if we reflect upon our past for a moment as to where we came from and where we go from here. A majority of our adult population has been living in the West for over two decades now and a large number of them are thinking of their retirement life in the not-too-distant future. Many of us thought that we would eventually return to our native land but that idea doesn't hold well any more with some of us at least. How can we leave our children and grandchildren here and go back and settle in Kerala or any other parts of India? Well, that's the question many of us are debating about. Remember, we didn't ask ourselves the question 'How could I leave my parents alone in India?', when we decided to leave the country of our birth in search of a better job and a better environment to live in. So, what are our plans and common goals as we slowly approach to the edge of the twenty-first century? As we get older and confined to wheelchair because of health problems, it would probably be too late to make any long term planning. Our children for whom we sacrificed so much of our time, money and energy may find it convenient to leave us alone in a nursing home or in the company of our friends. For most part of our lives in the West, we were more or less isolated from the society that we lived in. Our social life centered around our church life. The topic of our conversations with our friends often included the many facets of our church life including our never-ending complaints and frustrations about many things that have no real meaning in our lives. So long as we had a well-paying job and the opportunities to make more and more money, even at the cost of quality time that we spend with our family, we didn't really care about establishing our identity in our workplace or at the place we reside.

If we plan to spend our old age along with the rest of the folks in the area, then we must start assimilating into the American society and be prepared to perform our own civic responsibilities. We must be willing to participate in local American cultural or social functions; otherwise, by confining our participation only to Indian or Kerala cultural activities, we are missing an opportunity to educate ourselves in the subtleties of refined behavior so essential to any civilized culture. Our culture (and, to a large degree, our success) will mostly be judged by our behavior and attitudes in every day life and how well we fulfil our responsibilities of participating in and contributing to local cultural activities. As we live and earn our livelihood here, we must be prepared to give back something in return to the society in which we live. We enjoy

many things that this society gave us and it's only fair that we spend part of our time for the benefit of the society in general and its unfortunate ones in particular. We can get involved with many a voluntary or charity organization and contribute our expertise and a very small portion of our income for the benefit of the poor and the helpless. We can form and volunteer to serve on committees and task forces on civic responsibilities. When we contribute to the success of charitable projects in our locality, when we speak out clearly and act directly and vigorously for the disfavored and disadvantaged people, we are performing our civic responsibility in its truest sense.

Those of us who have many more productive years of their lives left, and have established a career for themselves, can set apart a portion of their time and income for the benefit of the poor and the needy in India. If Dr. John Abraham, a practicing Dermatologist in Staten Island, could spend four to six weeks every year in remote villages of India, taking care of the poorest of the poor, certainly many more of our God fearing medical specialists in Mar Thoma Church could go and establish new mission fields in India and elsewhere. If a young college girl of 22 years from Iowa, named Minnie Alexander, could leave the comfort of her home and work as a volunteer in our Mar Thoma Church institutions in Kerala for over four months, then we could persuade some of our other youngsters to volunteer their services for a few months in our Church institutions.

Despite all our success, large amounts of disposable income at our disposal and generally high level of respect accorded to our family values and law abiding nature by the Americans, we know full well that many of our families have their own problems to cope with. There are increasing cases of delinquencies, addictions and other behavioral diseases. Alcoholic addictions, violent behavior of the spouses, lack of communication in the family are some of the problems in our families. Many of our youths do not want to talk to their parents about the anguish and agonies they are going through but they are in desperate need of professional counseling or someone they could relate to about their problems and trust as a friend. As a church, as a community, we need to address these problems. As long as some people look disparagingly on others from their gated enclaves, they can pretend that they are unaffected by the problems on the other side of the fence. One day, they'll realize that what affects one, affects all and that one family's pain is not another's gain.

LETTERS FROM READERS

News from N.A. parishes are not forthcoming

Lengthy articles on general subjects are dominating the contents of the Messenger. You can verify this point when you look into the last issue of the magazine in which many of the articles published cover 4-5 pages. This may seem to be a sign of growth of the magazine. But the fact is that readers lose their interest and enthusiasm in reading such lengthy articles. Moreover, in a magazine like this published quarterly from the Diocese, readers expect more items of news and information from our diocese and parishes in North America and U.K. So I feel that the articles of general nature should be published in not more than 3 pages maximum.

Abraham Philipose, Cypress, California

(It's the individual parish's responsibility to send in the 'News' to us for publication - Editor)

Are our women getting the support and recognition they deserve?

As you are focussing on "Our Church Life - Adults" in the April issue, I would like to point out a few things that our people are concerned about and which I have observed in the past.

For a moment let me take you to the Savika Sanghom meeting held in Michigan during the Family Conference 1992. The room was filled with emotions and frustrations. It was painful to watch and listen to participants who brought out factual incidents taking place around us. Why are some women subjected to brutal behavior? When a woman expresses difficulties, tension and conflicts, she is accused as looking for equality, financial independence in this country and authorities of her partner being questioned etc. We definitely see a double standard here. During the meeting, nothing was accomplished. First of all there was not enough time. We have established a history of cramming everything together and the priorities are being ignored. Second of all, our leaders are

not prepared or willing to intervene. Some of them just don't understand the difficulties.

Women back home have a bigger support system and a larger network system. Consequently, they don't usually approach an Achen for counseling. The reality is different here especially for all those who have no other family members. Unfortunately, most of the Achens are not equipped to handle the issues. Staying in this country only for 3-4 years also place them at a disadvantage. Most of us would like to see our Achens more in a service oriented role than in a controlling role.

Why are not women getting the support and recognition they deserve? "Always the severest critic of woman is a woman" says a certain writer. My observations are, others see us the way we allow them to see. Women are a kind of torn between their partners who are not sensitive to many issues and their children extremely sensitive to their own feelings. When we were new in this land, our priorities were different, we did pay more attention to certain matters which some of us are regretting the way we did. We were physically stronger and able to do things. But now we are becoming physically weak, emotionally frail, spiritually down, and looking for support and understanding from our partners and children. Are we getting it? Self destructive attempts are becoming a reality in our community. Women must start appreciating themselves, keep their self-esteem up, and take care of their body, mind and soul.

To my peers who often say, "What can we do"? Let me repeat what former British Prime Minister, Ms. Margaret Thatcher said, "If you want to know something ask a man, if you want to get anything done ask a woman."

Sara Philip, Livonia, Michigan

Episcopal Affiliation.

In the fall of 1992, the Episcopal Bishop R. Steward Wood granted permission for the

churches to perform the "service of affirmation" to two women. Bishop Wood believes it is necessary for gay couples to receive church's support and recognition of their life style. This permission angered many members of the Episcopal church. "No matter what the current political climate, homosexuality remains a sin," protested one parishioner in a letter to Bishop Wood. "These two women do not come to our church as repentant sinners but as wolves in sheep's clothing. They are activists in the cause of gay rights' and, I believe, their aim is to change canon law to avoid coming to terms with their sinful lifestyle." Also, in other States, the Episcopal church is ordaining homosexual priests. Since this incident is open news, I wonder why our church leaders have kept silent. All Bible studying Christians believe that homosexuality is an abomination in the sight of God. In the light of all these facts, I believe it is time to evaluate the Mar Thoma church's **affiliation** with the U.S. Episcopal church. Further, I would like to know what type of theological stand our church is going to take concerning issues such as abortion, homosexuality, aids, drugs and other deviated life styles. I call upon all Marthomites in North America to raise their opinions about this matter.

Our children are growing up in an environment where all kinds of promiscuous behavior is accepted and encouraged by the main line churches and other organizations. I think it is time to ask ourselves as Marthomites what kind of belief system we are leaving behind to our next generation. Is our Episcopal Affiliation necessary for us to have Sunday Services in the U.S.? Why aren't we hearing from our pulpits and leaders about aids, homosexuality, abortion, divorce, drug use and other substance abuses? I believe it is the solemn responsibility of each and every Marthomite in North America to speak against false Bible teachings and wrong interpretations of the Bible. (We have stated our belief that Bible is the foundation of **ALL** our Christian faith. Mar Thoma constitution-declaration-section I-article 3).

John M. Thomas, Livonia, Michigan

I have been reading some issues of the Mar Thoma Messenger after my coming here.

You are doing a splendid work as the Editor of the magazine. Your editorial in the current issue, the message to the youth, is quite uplifting. It's a challenge to the youth and a timely reminder to them to think of their parents and their struggles, the humble origin, the difficult circumstances under which the parents struggled to bring them up and to train them to face life's tasks and responsibilities. I have been reminded of what Charles Swindol has written "Do not forget the hole of the pit through which we have come" If the younger generation of our church ponder over these lessons, it will be a great blessing.

M.J. Jacob, Ottawa, Canada

Congratulations for your efforts in publishing good quality 'Mar Thoma Messenger'.

Rev. Thomas Alexander, Oklahoma City

Thank you for the two issues of the Mar Thoma Messenger. The content and layout are maintaining good quality...Congratulations! Look forward to future issues.

Dr.T.V. Thomas, Regina, Canada

The issues of the Mar Thoma Messenger are coming out well in attire and contents. Please keep it up. I suggest you publish articles from different authors if possible, to get different views and perspectives. The regulars could wait a little. More diverse contributors of articles mean more participation and more meaningful and thought provoking articles to the general readers.

Rev. Joseph Ayrookuzhy, Philadelphia

TRANSPLANTED ADULTS

Dr. P.T. Mammen, San Francisco



Let not the title surprise you. We are not speaking of adults who get an organ transplant for survival, but those of us from the rich traditions of

Kerala culture who have opted to live in a new country. With this change we have found ourselves with a new set of dynamics that must be carefully evaluated. We are transplanted that we may bear fruit, and more abundantly. As in the case of an organ transplant the potential for rejection is great.

Everywhere Present. I have had the privilege to travel to many areas of the world where people from Kerala inhabit. The late Dr. Paul Gupta observed, "I once found a Malayalee Christian selling salt in Hong Kong." I have not had the privilege to meet many Malayalees in Hong Kong. But wherever I have traveled I have seen Syrian Christians retaining the flavor of our religion and culture. After our professional demands are met, in our own private beings we are still Malayalees. In one country I visited I was invited to a Saturday night gathering. In this Mar Thoma home, I was first greeted by a young medical student who politely asked, "What drink can I fix for you, uncle, beer or scotch?" I settled for a cup of tea. The next morning I was the preacher at the local Anglican church. Several of those I saw the night before were at this service, of course, with tired eyes. The host of the home I visited was totally embarrassed to realize that it was a preacher who was at the house the previous evening. They did not have the thought even to give a formal "thanks" to the Lord for His manifold blessings at the meal time. Let us examine whether we are being the "salt of the earth" where God has placed us.

Motivation. When I left India in 1966 I came with the full intention of returning to India to accomplish something great for God. After a little while here it became apparent that I was not going to be able to return to India with two small children and be a full

fledged Malayalee. (Now Jeff is 23, and Julie is 22) I decided that I can be a person of influence for God here if I apply myself. The rest is history. As in most cases, we came away from our native land because the situation in this country is better than what we had. We wanted to improve our lot and we did our best within the limits. Now that we are here we must have a vision of the future. That vision must motivate us to be exceptional people, "called and set apart for God's purposes".

Family. The greatest contribution we can make in this country is to have strong Christian family. I am not naive to think this is an easy task. The challenge is great. When we arrived at the SFO International Airport we were awe struck by the commitment to excellence in this country. As I moved about I saw that the doors were seldom locked and cars were securely parked on the street. Senior

citizens could walk down to the corner store while women and children felt safe in their neighborhoods. But something has tragically gone wrong with the value system. "Progress" has hit us to the extent that we have thousands homeless on the streets, condoms are distributed to school children and needles to shoot up poison are free. We hear the cry, "How long does it have to be?" It is time to return to the values that made this country great. True progress brings us to a place of public commitment to respect one another, care for the poor and be compassionate to the hurting and needy. Lay aside all political argument.

Let us be honest. Some foundational values of our society have to be emphasized. That must originate within the parameters of the family.

Threatened Existence. The traditional family unit as we have known is under serious threat. The phrase "Variety of Families" does not seem destructive, but in reality this phrase is a new creation designed to convey that the traditional family unit is changing. Any two persons deciding to live in a convenient arrangement can now establish their own norms of behavior without the benefit of traditional family responsibilities. In this way the traditional views of marriage and family is replaced

"The greatest contribution we can make in this country is to have strong Christian family."

by what the new theorists would impose with the force of law.

Father, mother, children, grandparents and extended relatives cannot be replaced by the mere change of a word. Time-tested values ingrained in the mores of culture and tradition remain as the ideal for us. Without proper models we will further deteriorate and end up being a society without a uniting force. I urge you to take a serious look at what some people are offering in disguised terminology. Sympathy-evoking words like, "fairness, compassion, loving relationships and mutually caring", are also used to produce tolerance of lifestyles that can be destructive to the future of our families. There may be a flaw in human behavior, but we all need an ideal to guide us. Christian principles of behavior should be the ideal. We advocate returning to what we know to have worked. That traditional family unit as we have known is under serious threat.

Well-organized and strategically-placed secular masterminds are determined to rewrite the traditional family norms through every available political process. We need to ensure that our family is kept as our heritage. What shall it profit us after having gained the financial advantages and social respectability in society if we lose our own children to a new destructive force. In order to prevent this from occurring we must maintain excellent communication that is consistent with the new dynamics we are faced with. It should be the first priority of your household.

New Energy . Your family's communication cannot be effective unless the parents assume total responsibility to maintain openness. Let us examine the possibility of your successful family now being stagnated and potentially in trouble. Most marriages begin on the best of terms, and on the highest ideals. As time progresses real pressures mount, the early romantic fire now only flickers, and communication is reduced to the bare minimum because there is always so much to get done. Husband and wife do not talk much any more except about some problems at work, some issues about kids, who is spending money on what, and schedules that cover today and tomorrow. They are making good money, but the quality of life is not the best. A marital relationship that was to last "until death us do part" has now become unsatisfying to both partners. Some strain has crept in. The thought of ending it all has occurred, though both partners do not want that. This emotional crisis point can be reversed and the closeness and intimacy recovered. Remember, it is your spouse you are dealing with.

This is achieved by making some very important decisions. Many little choices we make at given point in time make up our predicament. The following are steps to evaluate your decision-making processes.

1. Realize that over a period of time you have allowed many choices to intervene in your priorities.
2. Examine your commitment to a happy marriage.
3. Understand the demand on your time has reduced the precious commodity you once cherished: time for each other.
4. Let your marriage take precedence over everything else - getting things done, providing for the children, and making more money, etc. Your child is seeking more than "things you give". The child needs you to give some quality time just to create security of affection.
5. Stop looking at the negative things you would like to say to your spouse, but instead listen to one another minding how you respond to your partner. Even turn off the television, sit and talk to each other at the porch or take a gentle walk outside together.
6. Accept responsibility for personal happiness instead of holding the spouse responsible to make you happy.
7. Take positive action toward personal growth, introducing some variety to your life by taking time for what you enjoy. Please add your own ideas...

Social Interaction. A good relationship may have occasional conflicts. but manage them with love. You can help that person with whom you have a conflict, overcome the tension by your gentle responses. Let both persons be winners. No one likes to be the loser. Try to resolve the present issue. Do not drag the past to the present to complicate the present. Let us be willing to change for the best of both. Accept others with all their differences, and use your strengths to complement the weaknesses of the other. Let the cardinal principles of communication be: commitment, caring, compliments and creativity. Above all let love of God prevail in your life. **Church should be where we model these virtues. On the contrary we have turned the social dynamics at church to be the venue through which we express our negative frustrations.**

Assimilation. This country has provided unlimited opportunities for those who wish to advance in life. The ratio of Marthomites in higher positions of influence in society has to increase. In the field of education, politics, government, business and the

like we must aim high. The classical image of an Indian is that he is not going to receive help from his/her own people. They usually try to bring each other down instead of building up each other. Imagine for a moment if we became a collective force to accomplish one major goal that will have influence in the society. Because of the fear of negative stereotypes we do not even try. We must also give back to the community in need out of our resources. Uplift of our community is part of our Christian response. There are plenty of opportunities to offer genuine help to various segments of our society, the poor and the needy are around us in this rich country.

Cultural Gap. There is a real problem between parents who were reared in the ways of the old culture and the children who are exposed to a new culture in this country. The tension remains high. In most cases it is the perception we have to deal with. The parents, having really sacrificed for the well being of children, to provide them the best possible which they did not ever have while growing up, feel helpless and deeply hurt at times when their children cannot understand the depth of their sacrifices or its values. The children, on the other hand, have to cope with their

peers according to the American system and at home according to the Indian system. If the grand parent or an uncle or aunt is part of the same house hold this tension is heightened. The parents are sandwiched between the ways that they have been raised and the patterns the children are having to cope with. This tension is most evident in establishing educational and career objectives and marriage proposals. The adults must be first of all willing to recognize that the pressure is real, and natural. There is no sin because there is a tension. The matter becomes sinful when we handle the moments of tension in unchristian ways. As members of the church family everyone involved must dedicate themselves to resolve conflicts in a Christian way only. Once that bottom line decision is taken we can intelligently discover methodologies to solve problems.

The Biblical principles of "Faith, hope and love" must preeminently rule our decision making process. We can deal with issues of racial prejudice and civil rights if we first commit ourselves to the "more excellent way - love: First love God with all your heart, strength and soul, and second, Love your neighbor as yourself. With God's help we shall be more than conquerors.

Dr. P. T. Mammen, an active member of our San Francisco parish, is the Executive Secretary of the Ecumenical Ministries in Northern California, an Organizational Development Specialist, and a Conference Speaker.

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NOW WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THESE SINNERS?

George J. Poikail, Dallas, Texas



SIN, in the language of mental health, is a three-fold alienation, the consequences of which are disastrous and fatal unless interdicted and treated.

1) It is an alienation from Higher Power or God as we name that Higher Power. - In such an alienation a person becomes suspicious, hateful and paranoid. People who are alienated from God are constantly complaining of what they do not have and they have no gratitude for what they have. They have character disorders which make them constant complainers about little things. They want everyone else to march to their tune and to conform to their standards of behavior. They are usually very intolerant of anyone who differs from their life-styles and convictions and are super-critical of anyone who dissents from them. They have no sense of a common Father or of a fellowship that is of God.

In any effort to create a community such people are hindrances. They find reasons to foster resentment and hatred and they never forgive because they themselves have not enjoyed the forgiveness of God. They are religious, conforming to traditions and rituals but they are not spiritual in knowing the meaning and depth of love.

2) Sin is an alienation from one's own self - People who are alienated from themselves are some of the most unhappy people. They have unrealistic expectations for themselves and when those expectations are not met, they become cynical, mean and even hateful. They lose respect for themselves. They compare themselves unfavorably with others and choose to spend a life-time in unhappiness and bitterness. They have difficulty in maintaining any genuine relationship because they themselves are not their own friends. So they become either isolated, feeling that they are not as good as others, or they become grandiose assuming that they are

better than others. Some go even further. They not only lose respect for themselves but they start positively hating themselves. In such a condition, they do not hesitate doing things that are self-destructive or destructive of human community in general.

3) Sin is an alienation from others - God has created us presupposing community and that means fellowship - a sense of belonging to one source of being for sustenance and support. But people who are alienated from God and themselves are also alienated from others. In such a condition, people are possessed with envy, suspicion, and ascription of wrong motives. In extreme cases they take steps to destroy others either because those others are different from them or because the others are seen as a threat.

People who are alienated from others, from community or society, are never satisfied. They insist upon imposing their will on the larger community. If others do not agree with them, they willfully destroy the community. Or they create their own communities of like-minded and alienated people and they create cults, of personality, of religion or belief systems.

II

Except those who are like the proverbial ostrich (which hides its head in the sand when contrary circumstances arise) anyone may recognize that the three-fold alienation are manifest in our small Mar Thoma

community in North America. Some of the behavioral manifestations of such alienation are:

1) There are a lot of unhappy Marthomites in spite of the fact that they have been lifted from a land of scarcity and planted in a land of abundant opportunities. And yet they remain unhappy and super-critical. They have not been as generous to the country that adopted them as immigrants and citizens as America has been generous to them. They still look askew and down at the very people who opened the doors of opportunity for the large numbers of Marthomites. This writer suspects that there is very little community between the Marthomites and the rest of the U.S. society.

“People who are alienated from others, from community or society, are never satisfied.”

There is very little gratitude intended or expressed for the opportunities offered to them. Instead there are loud complaints about the climate, the crime and the deficiencies of the "promised land" This writer knows too few people who want to make this their land. They have the myth of the eternal return, to "mother India" which itself lately has not been treating its children very kindly.

2) **There are dissensions among them** - It may not be an exaggeration to state that a majority of the Mar Thoma parishes and congregations have dissenting and warring parties, mostly on issues that have very little existential impact on the community or society in general. These dissensions arise from suspicions, fears and hatred. They certainly reflect an inability to forgive for not having experienced the freedom of being forgiven.

3) **There are increasing addictions and chemical dependence among them** - People turn to alcohol, drugs or other addictions because they are not at peace with God, with themselves or with others. They are assuaging feeling by drowning it in chemical substances that are readily available in the community. If a person does not respect himself/herself or even positively hates self, then a person is not mindful of what goes into the mouth or what comes out. It certainly is not the Spirit of God but it is alien spirit(s). Those spirits are potent enough to make ordinary people behave extraordinary and good people behave evil.

4) **These show up in self-abuse, self-hatred, extra-marital sexual affairs, spousal abuse, spousal murder, suicide and homicide.** Some good people have been lost to these diseases and there are people serving jail term, deserved or not, for killing other people, in rage, in alienation. This writer knows of children who are living in fear, women who suspect their husbands, husbands who hate their wives and of attempted and successful suicides.

III

Jesus loved sinners. They were terribly inconvenient but he loved them nevertheless. He loved the sick, the lame, the leper, the out-cast. He spent His time seeking them. He did not wait for them to call on Him. He went **seeking** them. His parables and stories made simple the profound truth of God

seeking people and they illustrated God's love for the sinner. The lost coin, the lost sheep and the lost son all speak of God's love. It always spoke about a master who was willing to set aside the majority of religious and self-righteous to go after the one lost soul.

The righteous majority are not lost because they conform. They show up in church regularly, say their prayers right and loud, bow east every time the priest turns west and put the sign of the cross repeatedly and correctly. That they too are lost no one recognizes because they show the **form** of piety. They conform and their salvation is conformity.

The lost sheep is the one who used its God-given will to wander a little too far, away from the crowd to experiment and discover. The lost coin is the one that rolled away from the others, venturing a little to the outskirts. The lost son is the one who ventured using his inheritance to spend and exercise his freedom. The elder son stayed home, a bitter soul, not having the experience of learning from his mistakes of venturing on his own. He never made any mistakes. He was never forgiven.

The most important thing about the coin, the sheep and the person is that they have sinned, and in doing so they have experienced the forgiveness and consequently and henceforth their relationship has been sweeter than had it been if they had not been lost or sinned. This is the paradox that St. Paul was trying to deal in Romans 5:20-6:4. Jesus said in Mark 5:31 "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (vs.31-32) Philip Malencthon a colleague and fellow-believer of Martin Luther was worried about his sinful nature and confided this to Luther. Luther is quoted as having said, "Brother Philip, sin boldly and believe more boldly" The greatest joy of a sinner is that God in Jesus Christ loves the sinner and seeks after the sinner. The greatest joy and relief are not in not having sinned but being forgiven.

IV

This writer is a confirmed sinner who is saved by the Grace of God in Jesus Christ and is being saved continuously through the living and loving

Jesus. He enjoys the fellowship of God in Jesus Christ who loves sinners such as he. Because of his earlier addiction to alcoholism he has suffered being the butt of jokes, innuendos, sarcasm and gossip but he is still here providing service to those suffering and hurting alcoholics, addicts and sinners. Quite often when he goes to church he wonders what he has in common with the religious and righteous who he worships with. The Mar Thoma Church in North America, more often than not, appears to be a place, a club, for the righteous and the good.

Where should the sinners then go? To blame our vicars (achens) who are three-year transients and bishops who are mere visitors, is missing the point. They are not part of the living loving community of enduring relationships here in North America. They are good people trying to do their best. They consider that there is no distinction between the "culture" in Kerala and the culture here and that the Marthomites here are simply an extension of Kerala, to be pastored and administered based on the vision and wisdom out of that limited constraint. This is not to blame anyone. The present structure and ministry are what the Marthomites in North America asked for and received and the leaders of the church are trying to meet what has been asked of them. They are not meeting the needs but only the wants.

Then what shall we do with the sinners such as this writer? Shall we write them off, laugh at them, look down upon them, condemn them (Oh! How easy to condemn them? Remember the righteous who whored with the prostitute and then brought her before Jesus to have her punished according to the law. Jesus called their bluff and forgave the woman) Shall we sacrifice these sinners to the Mar Thoma Rumor Network, faster than Fax, telephone, telegraph, or anything that man has invented. Oh how we rejoice re-telling of others' falls and failures! What shall we do with these sinners.

This writer has four suggestions:

1) **Education** - Marthomites need to know as millions of other American know that behavioral and addictive diseases are not a matter of shame. There was a young Indian girl who for couple of years was shut off in the house because she had endogenous depression. Finally someone helped her parents to take the girl to a psychiatrist and with anti-depressants, she is doing more than well. There

is a young woman in Houston who is schizophrenic but who is accused of being possessed by the devil since the symptoms mimic each other. Accurate information is very helpful in relieving people of guilt, shame and sorrow, all debilitating emotions. A person is not going to hell simply because he/she is afflicted with emotional or addictive disorders.

2) **Intervention** - Vernon Johnson, an Episcopal Priest, a recovering alcoholic and president of the Johnson Institute in Center City, Minnesota says that intervention is presenting accurate reality in a receivable fashion. It does not happen inadvertently or by happenstance. It takes careful planning and prayerful anticipation. Not all people are qualified to do this and it requires at least some training. Condemnation has no place in intervention but love has. Sympathy has no place in intervention but empathy has. People tend to be afraid of losing face.

“...intervention is presenting accurate reality in a receivable fashion.”

People who suffer need to know that they are protected of their confidentiality by Federal Regulations CFR 42 of 1957 and anyone who violates confidentiality is subject to five years of imprisonment plus fine. This writer would like to see before he dies a 1-800-MAR-TOMA number that any Marthomite may call any time to be referred to appropriate level of care. The minimum cost of such a line could be easily paid for by Diocesan revenue.

3) **Treatment** - Some diseases are not just removed by fasting and prayer. Prayer helps but people need treatment for behavioral and addictive disorders just like they need treatment for physical disorders. Treatment is available through the health insurance that all Marthomites carry and per chance if there is one that does not have such coverage, there is treatment available through the local, county or state MHMR system. The psychodynamics of behavioral and addictive disorders need treatment.

4) **Rehabilitation** - This writer has been amazed at the number of resources available for the rehabilitation of people through private and public means. He has had patients for whom the Texas Rehabilitation Commission had paid room, board, training and vocational rehabilitation based on behavioral and addictive disabilities. The Clinton administration is about to mandate coverage of behavioral and addictive disorders just as physical disorders. The resources are here. There is no need to suffer unnecessary pain. Stress is inevitable. Getting up

in the morning and getting going is stressful. What people do with those stresses and how they cope with them is what makes them healthy or unhealthy.

Jesus had a series of instructions for healthy coping behavior. "Do not take thought of tomorrow" said he. Millions of alcoholics in recovery tonight are saying "Take one day at a time." "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" said Jesus. Millions of recovering people are saying "First things first". They are also saying "Let Go and Let God"

V

The place where this writer offices is part of Greater Dallas which has over 1500 meetings a week for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts who had accepted their powerlessness over chemicals (Step 1) the powerfulness of God over their lives so that they can return to sanity (Step 2) and their commitment to turn their wills and lives over to God (Step 3). They have nine more steps but the first three are the basics that they repeat everyday.

These meetings have no appointed leader or hierarchy. They have no bishops, priests or liturgy other than the spontaneity provided by the group. The process is simple. It is a celebration of recovery. It is an enjoyment of forgiveness. Ernest Kurtz in the book **NOT GOD** says that these meetings are powerful because there **people in open honesty admit their own vulnerability** of failure, of relapse. Jesus the Christ is celebrated, consciously or not, because He suffered shame, sorrow and pain and He turned sorrow into joy.

Should we as a church do anything less? Should we not open our doors to sinners so that they too can come and share in their forgiveness and joy? Why are our churches dead and closed except on Sundays?

The closing thoughts of this piece is the famous prayer of Reinhold Niebuhr who had great influence on the theological, political and social thought during the last fifty years. He taught and was a friend of some of the leaders of our church. During the height of the Second World War he wrote a prayer, the first part of which millions of recovering people recite everyday before they close their meetings with the Lord's Prayer.

**God, grant me the courage to change
the things I can,
To accept the things I cannot change
And the wisdom to know the difference, Amen**

May every reader of this piece somehow, some-

time and somewhere find and enjoy the sweetness and acceptance of God in Jesus Christ, who according to Paul in II Corinthians 5:19 was always reconciling the world unto Himself, this writer, you and all the sinners included.

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കടലിനക്കരയുള്ള രാജകുമാരൻ

കടലിനക്കരയിലെന്നൊരു മണവാളൻ, അല്ലെങ്കിൽ മണവാട്ടി. ഇതിൽപരം ഭാഗ്യം വരാതില്ല. ഈ ധാരണ വച്ചുപുലർത്തുന്ന മലയാളികളുടെ എണ്ണം കുറയുകയല്ല കൂടുകയാണ്.

വരനോ വധുവോ അറബിക്കടലിന് അക്കരെ ഗൾഫിൽനിന്നോ അറ്റ്ലാന്റിക് സമുദ്രത്തിന്റെ അങ്ങോട്ടു നോക്കി അമേരിക്കയിൽനിന്നോ ആയിക്കൊള്ളട്ടെ, കൈവന്ന ഭാഗ്യം വഴുതിപ്പോകാതിരിക്കാൻ എത്രയും വേഗം കരുനീക്കം നടത്താനാണ് എല്ലാവർക്കും താൽപ്പര്യം. പക്ഷേ, ചുരുങ്ങിയ സമയത്തിനുള്ളിൽ തല്ലിക്കൂട്ടിയെടുക്കുന്ന ഇത്തരം വിവാഹബന്ധങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന സാമൂഹികപ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ കുറച്ചൊന്നുമല്ല.

വേണ്ടത്ര അന്വേഷണങ്ങളോ അടിപ്രായശ്ചരണമോ കൂടാതെ വിദേശ ഇന്ത്യക്കാരുമായി തിടുക്കത്തിൽ നടത്തുന്ന വിവാഹങ്ങൾ പിന്നീടു തകർച്ചയിലേക്കു വഴുതിവീഴുന്ന കഥകൾ അമേരിക്കയിലേക്കു പുത്തരിയല്ല. വിവാഹബന്ധത്തിന് അവശ്യം വേണ്ട സാംസ്കാരിക, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ, സാമ്പത്തിക പൊരുത്തങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റിയുള്ള ചിന്താമറ്റിനിർത്തി സാമ്പത്തികദൃഢതയും കൂട്ടുംബത്തിന്റെ അഭിമാനവും ഐശ്വര്യവും മാത്രം ലക്ഷ്യമിട്ടു നടത്തുന്ന ദാമ്പത്യബന്ധങ്ങൾ ജീവിതത്തെ നരകതുല്യമാക്കുന്ന അനുഭവങ്ങൾ ഒട്ടറെയുണ്ട്. വിവാഹാനന്തരം ഒഴിയാത്ത നെടുവീർപ്പിലും തീരാത്ത ദുഃഖത്തിലും വ്യക്തിജീവിതവും കൂട്ടുംബബന്ധങ്ങളും നീറിപ്പുകയാനാണു പലരുടെയും വിധി. ദാമ്പത്യബന്ധത്തിന്റെ സൗന്ദര്യത്തിനു പകരം ദമ്പതികളുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ നിഴലിക്കുന്നതു നിരാശയും വെറുപ്പും മാത്രം. നീറിപ്പുകയുന്ന മനസ്സുകൾ. ഇഴപിരിയുന്ന കൂട്ടുംബബന്ധങ്ങൾ. അവയ്ക്കിടയിൽപ്പെട്ട അനാഥരാകുന്ന കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങൾ. മാട്രിപ്പിടഞ്ഞ് ഇത്തരമൊരു വിവാഹത്തിന് ഒരുമ്പെട്ട അടിശ്ശികമുഹൂർത്തത്തെ പഴിക്കുകയേ പിന്നെ നിർവാഹമുള്ളൂ.

ലക്ഷക്കണക്കിനു മലയാളികളുള്ള അമേരിക്കൻ ഐക്യനാടുകളിൽ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസരംഗത്തായാലും സാമൂഹിക - രാഷ്ട്രീയ മേഖലകളിലായാലും മലയാളികൾക്ക് അവഗണിക്കാനാവാത്ത സ്ഥാനമുണ്ടിന്ന്. പ്രതിഭകൊണ്ടും കഴിവുകൊണ്ടും ഒട്ടേറെപ്പേർ ഭരണകൂടത്തിന്റെയും അമേരിക്കൻ ജനതയുടെയും പ്രശംസ പിടിച്ചുപറ്റുന്നുണ്ട്.

എങ്കിലും സാമ്പത്തിക - വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ രംഗത്തു മലയാളികൾ തമ്മിൽ, മറ്റുവിടെയുമെന്നപോലെ, വ്യത്യാസങ്ങളുണ്ടാകുക സാഭാവികമാണല്ലോ. അമേരിക്ക

യിൽ ജനിച്ചവളർന്നവർ തമ്മിലുള്ള വിവാഹങ്ങളിൽ കൂട്ടുംബപശ്ചാത്തലവും മറ്റും പരിഗണനയ്ക്കു വിധേയമാകുന്ന തോടൊപ്പം സാമ്പത്തിക - വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ - തൊഴിൽകാര്യങ്ങളും പരിശോധിക്കപ്പെടാൻ സമയവും സാവകാശവുമുണ്ട്. അതിനാൽ ഇത്തരം വിവാഹങ്ങൾ, പ്രായപൂർത്തിയായ യുവാവും യുവതിയും മുൻകൈയെടുത്തു നടത്തുന്നവയായാൽപ്പോലും വിജയസാധ്യതയിൽ മുന്നിട്ടുനിൽക്കുന്നു. കേരളത്തിലുള്ളവരും അമേരിക്കൻ മലയാളികളും തമ്മിലുള്ള ബന്ധങ്ങളുടെ വ്യത്യാസം ഇവിടെയാണു വ്യക്തമാകുക.

അമേരിക്കൻ മലയാളികളുമായി വിവാഹത്തിനൊരുങ്ങുമ്പോൾ വരന്റെയോ വധുവിന്റെയോ ജീവിതപശ്ചാത്തലം, കൂട്ടുംബപശ്ചാത്തലം, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ യോഗ്യത, തൊഴിൽ - വേതന

തുകൊമെന്നറിയുക. ഹൈസ്കൂൾ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം കഴിഞ്ഞുപൂർത്തിയാക്കി അമേരിക്കയിൽ എത്തി ഏതെങ്കിലും ജോലി ചെയ്തു പരിഷ്കാരിയായി നാട്ടിൽ മടങ്ങിവന്നു ഡിഗ്രിയുള്ളവരെയും ബിരുദാനന്തര ഡിഗ്രിക്കാരെയും വിവാഹം കഴിക്കുന്നവരും കുറവല്ല. ഇതിൽ ഒറ്റനോട്ടത്തിൽ തെറ്റൊന്നുമില്ലെങ്കിലും ഭാവി ജീവിതത്തിൽ ഈ പൊരുത്തക്കേടു പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്നുവെന്നാണ് അനുഭവം. അപകർഷതാബോധവും ഉച്ച - നീചചിന്തയും പൂർണ്ണമനോഭാവവും ദമ്പതികളുടെ പെരുമാറ്റത്തിൽ അപസരങ്ങൾക്കു വാതിൽ തുറക്കാറുണ്ട്.

കൂട്ടുംബപാരമ്പര്യത്തിനും തായ്വഴികൾക്കും മറ്റും അമിതപ്രാധാന്യം കൊടുക്കുന്നവരാണെങ്കിൽ ഇത്തരം വിവാഹബന്ധങ്ങളിൽ മറ്റൊരപകരംകൂടി

ഡോ. വി. ടി. സാമുവൽ

കാര്യങ്ങൾ - ഇവയൊക്കെ മനസിലാക്കിവേണം മുന്നോട്ടു നീങ്ങാൻ. തൊഴിൽ - വേതനരീതിതന്നെ ഉദാഹരണം - അമേരിക്കയിലാണ് എന്നതുകൊണ്ടുമാത്രം പ്രതിശ്രുതവരനോ വധുവോ അവരുടെ കൂട്ടുംബമോ സമ്പന്നരാകണമെന്നില്ല. ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ ഏറ്റവും കുറഞ്ഞ വേതനനിരക്ക് മണിക്കൂറിനു നാലര ഡോളറാണ്. 40 മണിക്കൂർ ജോലി ചെയ്യുന്നയാൾക്ക് ഒരാഴ്ചയിൽ 180 ഡോളർ എന്നു കണക്കാക്കാം. വർഷത്തിലെ 52 ആഴ്ചയും ഇങ്ങനെ ശമ്പളം കിട്ടുന്നുവെന്നു കരുതിയാൽ അതു രൂപയാക്കി മാറ്റുമ്പോൾ ആ വ്യക്തി ലക്ഷപ്രഭുവാണു്.

എന്നാൽ സത്യം ഇതിൽനിന്ന് ഏറെ അകലെയാണ്. വേതനത്തിൽനിന്ന് ആദായനികുതി, വാർഷികകാല പെൻഷൻ വിഹിതം, രോഗചികിത്സാ വിഹിതം, വിട്ടുവാടക, കാറിന്റെ മാസവിതാംശം ഇതൊക്കെ കൊടുത്തു കൈയിൽ മിച്ചം വരുന്ന തുക വേണ്ട രീതിയിൽ ഭക്ഷണം കഴിക്കാൻതന്നെ തികയുമായെന്നു സംശയിക്കണം. അമേരിക്കയിൽ തൊഴിൽ പരിശീലനവും വിദ്യാഭ്യാസവും പൂർത്തിയാക്കുന്നവർക്കേ ഉയർന്ന ശമ്പളസ്കെയിൽ വാങ്ങാൻ കഴിയുവെന്നതാണു പലരും മറക്കുന്ന വസ്തുത. അമേരിക്കയിൽ ജോലിയുള്ള ആൾ എന്നു കേൾക്കുമ്പോൾ മറ്റൊരാൾ മറക്കുന്ന പ്രവണത അപകടകരമാണെന്നോർക്കുക. എന്തു ജോലി, ജോലി കിട്ടിയിട്ട് എത്ര നാൾ, ഏതു സ്ഥാപനത്തിൽ ജോലി ചെയ്യുന്നു - ഇതൊക്കെ ആരാധകതന്നെ വേണം.

വിദ്യാഭ്യാസനിലവാരത്തിലുള്ള പൊരുത്തക്കേടും പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾക്കു വഴി

പതുങ്ങിയിരിപ്പുണ്ട്. പഴയ തറവാട്ടുകാരും വിദേശസമ്പാദ്യംമൂലം സമ്പന്നരായ പുതുപ്പണക്കാരും തമ്മിലുള്ള വിവാഹങ്ങൾ കാലക്രമേണ കൂട്ടുംബബന്ധങ്ങളെപ്പോലും പിടിച്ചുലയ്ക്കുന്നത് അപൂർവമല്ല. വിവാഹത്തിൽ പെൺകുട്ടിയോ ആൺകുട്ടിയോ മാത്രമായിരിക്കും

“മാവിലെ വിവാഹവും വൈകിട്ടു വീവാഹമോചനവും” പാശ്ചാത്യസംസ്കാരത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമാണ്. അമേരിക്കയിലോ യൂറോപ്യൻ നാടുകളിലോ ജനിച്ചവളർന്നു വിവാഹിതരാകുന്നവർക്ക് ഇത് അവരുടെ ജീവിതശൈലിയുടെ ഭാഗമാണെന്നു പറയാം. തങ്ങളുടെ മക്കൾ അമേരിക്കൻ ശൈലിയിൽ ജീവിച്ചു തെറ്റിപ്പോകേണ്ടെന്നു കരുതി നാട്ടിൽനിന്നു വധുവിനെയോ വരനെയോ സ്വീകരിക്കാൻ ഒരുതരം നിർബന്ധബുദ്ധിമുട്ടുള്ള പ്രേരിപ്പിക്കലും വിവാഹം നടത്തുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന മാതാപിതാക്കളുണ്ട്. ഇങ്ങനെ വിവാഹിതരാകുന്നവർ ഏറെ വൈകാതെ പഴയ കൂട്ടുകാരനെയോ കൂട്ടുകാരിയെയോ തേടി പഴയ താവളങ്ങളിലേക്കു പോകുന്ന അനുഭവങ്ങളും വിരളമല്ല. പുതിയ വരനെ/വധുവിനെ തള്ളിപ്പറയാൻ മടിക്കാത്ത ഇവർക്ക് ഈ കൂട്ടുമാറ്റം ജീവിതശൈലിയുടെ ഭാഗംതന്നെയാണ്.

ഭാര്യയോ ഭർത്താവോ ജീവിച്ചിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ വിവാഹമോചനം നേടി നാട്ടിൽ വന്നു വീണ്ടും വിവാഹിതരാകുന്ന സംഭവങ്ങളും അപൂർവമായെങ്കിലും കണ്ടെത്താറുണ്ട്. വാൾദത്താഭ്യായിൽ തിരിച്ചെത്തുമ്പോഴാണു സത്യസ്ഥിതി മനസിലാവുക. പിന്നെ കേസും കോടതിയും വിവാഹമോചനവും മാത്രമായിരിക്കും ശരണം. ഇതിനൊരു മറുവശമുണ്ട്:

അമേരിക്കയിൽ കടന്നുകൂടാൻവേണ്ടി മാത്രം വിദേശമലയാളിയെ വിവാഹം കഴിച്ച് അവിടെച്ചെന്ന് ഏറെക്കഴിയാതെ വിവാഹമോചനം നേടി നാട്ടിൽ തിരിച്ചെത്തി ഇഷ്ടഭാജനത്തെ സ്വന്തമാക്കുന്ന വിവാഹാരം കുറവല്ല.

ഛായാസ്തുതിമുഴുവൻ ദുഃഖിക്കാനും നീറിപ്പുകയാനും ഇടവരുത്തുന്ന കച്ചവടലക്ഷ്യത്തോടെയുള്ള വിവാഹബന്ധങ്ങളെ ഒഴിവാക്കാൻ ചില മാർഗ്ഗനിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾകൂടി ചുണ്ടിക്കാട്ടാം:

1. വിവാഹലോചനയ്ക്കും അതിന്റെ പൂർത്തിയാക്കുന്നതിനും വേണ്ടത്ര സമയമെടുക്കുക.
2. വധുവോ വരനോ അമേരിക്കയിലാണെങ്കിൽ, അവരുടെ ചുറ്റുപാടുകൾ വിശദമായി അന്വേഷിച്ചറിയുക. മലയാളികളുടെതന്നെ സംഘടനകൾ, സഭാ അധികാരികൾ, പാസ്റ്റർമാർ, മറ്റു സുഹൃത്തുക്കളും ബന്ധുക്കളും വാർത്താവിനിമയബന്ധങ്ങൾ വളരെയേറെ വികസിപ്പിച്ചു തന്നെ കാലത്തു ഫോൺവഴിയോ ഫാക്സ് വഴിയോ വിവരങ്ങൾ മണിക്കൂറുകൾക്കുള്ളിൽ ശേഖരിക്കാൻ ശ്രദ്ധസമുണ്ടാകില്ല.
3. മിക്കവാറും എല്ലാ തരത്തിലും (വയസ്സ്, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം, സാമ്പത്തികനില, കൂട്ടുംബം, മതബോധം) പൊരുത്തമുള്ളവരെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുന്നതിൽ മാതാപിതാക്കളോടൊപ്പം വധുവരന്മാർക്കും അടിപ്രായസ്വായത്വം നൽകുക.
4. വിവാഹാനന്തരം നവദമ്പതികൾക്കു കൂടുതൽ സമയം ചെലവഴിക്കാൻ സാഹചര്യം ഒരുക്കുക. ഇതിനായി അവധിയുടെ ആരംഭത്തിൽ വിവാഹം നടത്താൻ ശ്രമിക്കുക. ജീവിതത്തിലെ പുതിയ അധ്യായം എഴുതിച്ചേർക്കുന്ന പ്രക്രിയയിൽ മാനസിക - വൈകാരിക - ലൈംഗിക പൊരുത്തം കണ്ടെത്തുകയെന്നതു ഭാവിയുടെ വിജയത്തിന് അനിവാര്യമാണെന്നു മാതാപിതാക്കൾ അംഗീകരിക്കണം.
5. പൗരസ്വരേഖകളുമായാണു വിവാഹത്തിനു തയ്യാറായി എത്തിയിരിക്കുന്നതെങ്കിൽ അമേരിക്കയിലേക്കുള്ള ദമ്പതികളുടെ ഒരുമിച്ചുള്ള യാത്ര താരതമ്യേന വേഗത്തിലായിക്കിട്ടാൻ ഇടയുണ്ട്. അതിനാൽ വിവാഹത്തിനു വരുമ്പോൾത്തന്നെ രേഖകൾ ഉറപ്പാക്കുക. അതിദുഃതചലനം ചുവടുവഴിയായ ആധുനിക ജീവിതരീതിക്ക് ഇണങ്ങുന്ന തല്ലെങ്കിലും ദാമ്പത്യബന്ധങ്ങളുടെ അടിസ്ഥാന വേണ്ടത്ര അന്വേഷണങ്ങളുടെയും പരിശോധനകളുടെയും പിൻബലമുള്ളതായിരിക്കട്ടെ. അതിനുവേണ്ടി ‘പാഴാക്കുന്ന’ സമയവും പണവും ഭാവിയിലേക്കുള്ള നിക്ഷേപമായിരിക്കുമെന്നതിൽ സംശയമില്ല - സൃഷ്ടിച്ചാൽ ദുഃഖിക്കേണ്ട.

സങ്കീർത്തനങ്ങൾ

എട്ട്

[ഗത്യരാഗത്തിൽ സംഗീതപ്രമാണിക്ക്; ദാവീദിന്റെ ഒരു സങ്കീർത്തനം]

1
 യഹോവേ, ഞങ്ങളുടെ യഹോവേ,
 നിന്റെ നാമം ദുമിയിലെങ്ങും
 എത്രയോശ്രേഷ്ഠമാകുന്നു!

2
 ശിശുക്കളുപിഞ്ചുപൈതങ്ങളും
 നിന്റെ സ്വർഗ്ഗീയ മഹിമയെ വാഴ്ത്തുന്നു;
 ശത്രുക്കൾ കാരണം,
 വൈരികളും പ്രതികരിക്കും എതിരെ
 നീയൊരു പ്രതിരോധം സ്മാപിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു.

3
 നിന്റെ വിരലുകൾ മെനഞ്ഞ ആകാശത്തെയും
 നീ സൃഷ്ടിച്ച താരചന്ദ്രാദികളെയും വീക്ഷിക്കെ
 ഞാൻ ചോദിച്ചു പോകുന്നു:

4
 മർത്യനെ നീ ഓർമ്മിക്കുവാൻ മാത്രം.
 അവനാര്?
 മനുഷ്യപുത്രനെ ഇത്രയ്ക്കു കരുതുവാൻ
 അവനെന്ത്?

5
 എന്നിട്ടും,
 ദൈവത്തെക്കാൾ തെല്ലിട മാത്രം താഴ്ത്തി

മർത്യനെ നീ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചു;
 അന്തസ്സും മഹിമയും കൊണ്ട്
 അവനെ കിരീടം ധരിപ്പിച്ചു.

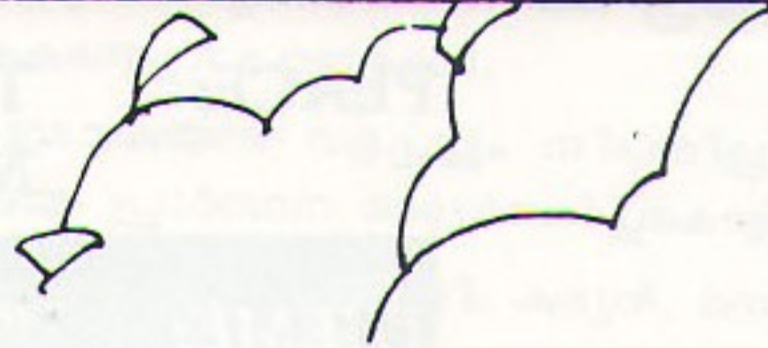
6
 നിന്റെകൈവേലകൾക്ക്
 അവൻ നീ അധിപതിയാക്കി;
 എല്ലാം അവൻ കാൽക്കീഴിൽ
 നീ ഒരുക്കി;

7
 അജങ്ങൾ വൃഷഭങ്ങൾ
 കാട്ടിലെന്നാനാമൃഗങ്ങൾ.

8
 ആകാശത്തിലെപറവകൾ
 കടലിലെ മത്സങ്ങൾ
 സമുദ്രഗർഭത്തിലലയുന്ന
 അനേകതരം ജീവികൾ
 എന്നിവയെല്ലാംതന്നെ.

9
 യഹോവേ, ഞങ്ങളുടെ യഹോവേ,
 ദുമിയിലെങ്ങും നിന്റെ നാമം
 എത്രയോശ്രേഷ്ഠമാകുന്നു!

ചെറിയാൻ കെ. ചെറിയാൻ



ചിന്തിക്കുന്നു

[സംഗീതപ്രമാണിക്ക്; ദാവീദിന്റെ ഒരു സങ്കീർത്തനം]

1
 യഹോവയിലത്രേ
 ഞാൻ ശരണം പ്രാപിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്;
 പക്ഷിയെപ്പോലെ
 പർവ്വതങ്ങളിലേക്കുപറന്നകലുവിൻ;

2
 സത്യസന്ധരെ എയ്തുവീഴ്ത്തുവാൻ വേണ്ടി
 ഇരുളിന്റെ മറവിൽ ദുഷ്ടന്മാർ
 അസ്ത്രം തൊടുത്ത്, വില്ലു കൂലച്ച്
 നിലകൊള്ളുന്നു;

3
 അടിത്തറ തകർന്നു പോയാൽ
 നീതിമാന്
 എന്തു ചെയ്യാനാവും? എന്നിങ്ങനെ
 നിങ്ങൾക്കെന്നോഷ്ഠനയാനാവുന്നതെങ്ങനെ?

4
 യഹോവ തന്റെ വിശുദ്ധമന്ദിരത്തിൽ
 വസിക്കുന്നു;

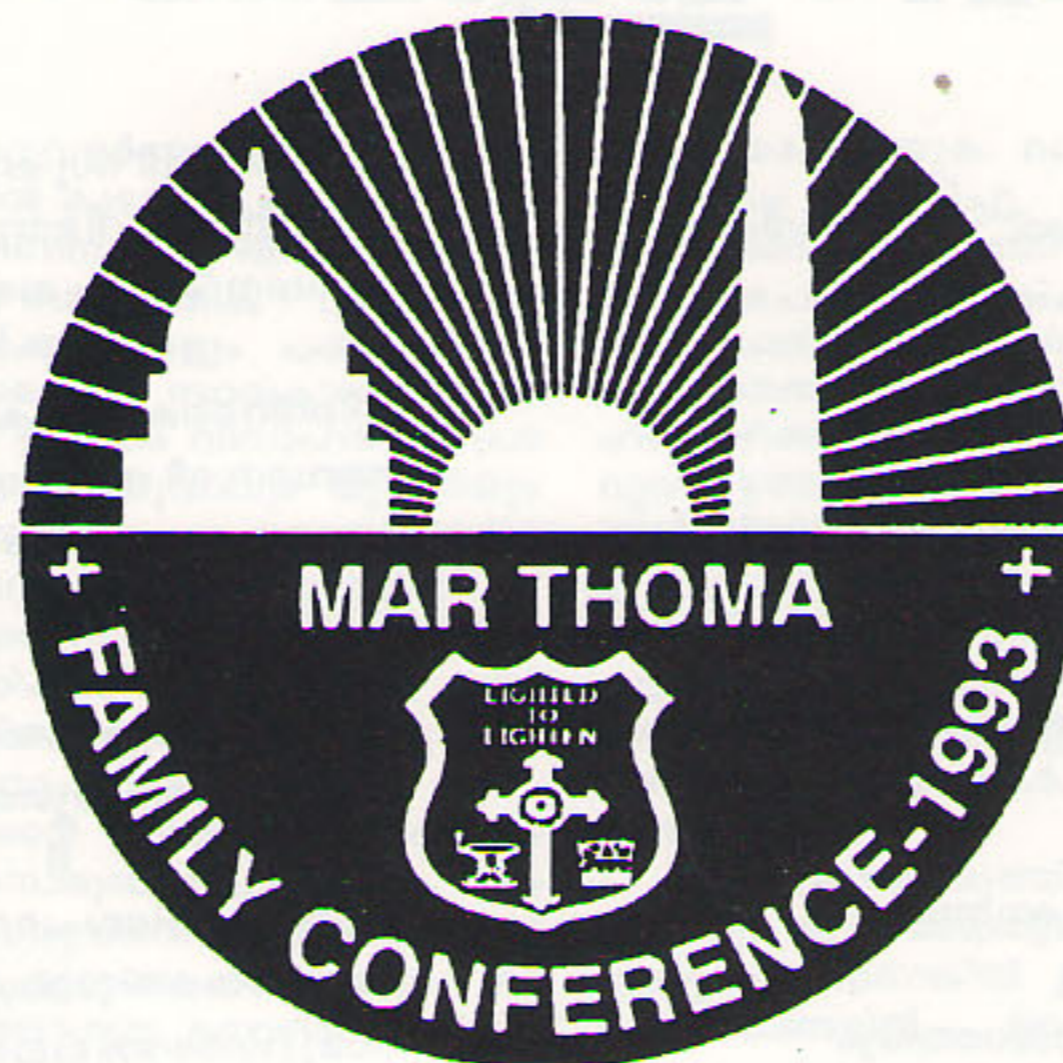
യഹോവയുടെസിംഹാസനം
 സ്വർഗ്ഗത്തിലത്രേ;
 അവന്റെ കണ്ണുകൾ നീരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു;
 അവന്റെ കൺപോളകൾ
 മനുഷ്യപുത്രനെ ശോധന ചെയ്യുന്നു.

5
 നീതിമാനെയുംദുഷ്ടനെയും
 യഹോവപരിശോധിക്കുന്നു;
 സാഹസപ്രിയനെ
 അവൻ ഉള്ളാൽ വെറുക്കുന്നു.

6
 ദുഷ്ടന്മാരുടെ മേൽ
 അവൻ രീക്കനലും ഗന്ധകവും വർഷിക്കും;
 അവരുടെ കോപ്പയിൽ പാനീയമായി
 ചൂടുകാറ്റു നിറക്കും.

7
 യഹോവനീതിമാനാകുന്നു;
 അവൻ സദാകർമ്മങ്ങളെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നു;
 നേരുള്ളവർ
 അവന്റെ വദനം ദർശിക്കും.

AN INVITATION TO WASHINGTON



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Micah 6:8

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മലങ്കര സഭാതാരക

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ന്യൂയോർക്കിൽ മാതേന്താമ്മാസഭ
രൂപംകൊള്ളുന്നു.

ന്യൂയോർക്ക് നഗരത്തിലും പരിസരപ്രദേശങ്ങളിലുമുള്ള മാതേന്താമ്മാ സഭാവിഭാഗത്തിൽപെട്ട ആളുകളുടെ പ്രാർത്ഥനയാലും നിരന്തരപരിശ്രമത്താലും 1972 ഏപ്രിൽ മാസം 9-ാം തീയതി ന്യൂയോർക്കിൽ ജന്മമെടുത്തുവെള്ള ലൂഥറൻ പള്ളിയിൽ വെച്ച് മാതേന്താമ്മാസഭയുടെ ആദ്യത്തെ ശുശ്രൂഷനടത്തപ്പെട്ടു. വളരെപ്പേർ പ്രാർത്ഥനയോടെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിരുന്ന ഈ ശുശ്രൂഷനടത്തിയത് ശ്രീമാൻ ജോസഫ് മട്ടിയൂൽ എന്ന ദേഹമാണ്. ശുശ്രൂഷാനന്തരം കൂടിയ പൊതുയോഗത്തിൽ ഭാരവാഹികളെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുകയും ഭാവിപരിപാടികൾ ആസൂത്രണം ചെയ്യപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്തു. മാതേന്താമ്മാസഭയുടെ വിശ്വാസാചാരങ്ങളിൽ ഉറച്ചുനിന്നുകൊണ്ട് മറ്റു സഭകളുമായി സഹകരണത്തിലും സാഹോദര്യത്തിലും മുന്പോട്ടുപോകേണ്ടതാണെന്നു പൊതുയോഗം തീരുമാനിച്ചു.

ന്യൂയോർക്കിൽ ഒരു മാതേന്താമ്മാ ഇടവക സ്ഥാപിച്ചു കിട്ടുന്നതിനുവേണ്ട അനുഭവവും അനുഗ്രഹശിസ്സുകളും നൽകുന്നതിനു് മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുമനസ്സിനോടു് അഭ്യർത്ഥിക്കുന്ന ഒരു പ്രമേയം യോഗം ഐക്യകണ്ഠ്യേണ പാസ്സാക്കി.

ഈ ഇടവകയുടെ വളർച്ചയും നിലനില്പിനും എല്ലാവരുടെയും പ്രാർത്ഥന അഭ്യർത്ഥിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

ജോർജ്ജ് പി. കര്യൻ, സെക്രട്ടറി.

1
യഹോവേ, സഹായിക്കേണമേ;
ഭക്തന്മാർ ഇല്ലെന്നായിരിക്കുന്നു;
മനുഷ്യമക്കൾക്കിടയിൽ
ആത്മാർത്ഥത അഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു.

2
ഏവരും അയൽക്കാരുടെ വ്യാജം ഭാഷിക്കുന്നു;
അവരുടെ അധരം മുഖസ്തുതി പൊഴിയുന്നു;
അവരുടെ ഹൃദയം ഇരുപക്ഷത്തും ചേരുന്നു.

3
"നാവായ്ക്കു ഞങ്ങൾ വിജയിക്കും;
അധരം ഞങ്ങൾക്കു തുണ;
ആർ ഞങ്ങളുടെ യജമാനൻ?"

4
എന്നുവീമ്പിക്കുന്നവരുടെ
മുഖസ്തുതിയാർന്ന അയങ്ങളെയും
അഹങ്കരിക്കുന്ന നാവിയെയും
യഹോവേ മേൽനോട്ടം ചെയ്യട്ടെ.

5
"അഗതികൾ വെച്ചിടയും
ദരിദ്രർ പീഡിതരുമത്രേ;
ഇനിയും ഞാൻ എഴുന്നേൽക്കും;
അവർ കാംക്ഷിക്കുന്ന രക്ഷ
ഞാനവർക്കുകൊടുക്കും",
എന്നു യഹോവേ അരുളിച്ചെയ്യുന്നു.

6
ഏഴു തവണ ശുദ്ധിയെത്തു തുടങ്ങിയപ്പോൾ
യഹോവേയുടെ വചനങ്ങൾ നിർമ്മലം തന്നെ.

7
ഈ തലമുറയിൽ നിന്നു ഞങ്ങളെ രക്ഷിച്ചു
യഹോവേ, അദ്ദേഹം നൽകേണമേ.

8
മനുഷ്യമക്കൾക്കിടയിൽ നീചത്വം വളരുമ്പോൾ
ദുഷ്ടന്മാർ എവിടെയും ഇരതേടി നടക്കും.

ചെറിയാൻ കെ.ചെറിയാൻ

സങ്കീർത്തനങ്ങൾ
പതിമൂന്ന്

[സംഗീതപ്രമാണിക്ക്; ദാവീദിന്റെ ഒരു സങ്കീർത്തനം.]

1
എത്രകാലം, യഹോവേ?
എന്നേക്കുമായി നീ എന്നെ മറക്കുമോ?
എത്രനാൾ നിൻ മുഖപ്രകാശം
ഞാൻ കാണാത്തവിധം നീ മറയ്ക്കും?

2
എത്രകാലം ഈ വേദന
ആത്മാവിനു സഹിക്കേണ്ടിവരും?
ദുഃഖമെൻ ഹൃദയത്തിന്
അനുദിനം വഹിക്കേണ്ടിവരും?
ഉദ്ധതരായ വൈരികൾ
എത്രനാൾ മുന്നിൽ നിലകൊള്ളും?

3
ദൈവമായ യഹോവേ,
എന്നെ നിരൂപിച്ച് ഉത്തരമരുളേണമേ;

മരണനിദ്രയിൽ മുഴുകാതിരിപ്പാൻ
നിയെന്റെ കണ്ണുകളിൽ
പ്രകാശം പകരേണമേ.

4
"ഞങ്ങളവനെ തോല്പിച്ചു", എന്ന്
ശത്രുക്കൾ പറയാതിരിക്കട്ടെ;
ഞാൻ വിഭ്രമിച്ചെന്നു കരുതി
വൈരികൾ ഇല്ല സിക്കാതിരിക്കട്ടെ.

5
നിന്റെ കാര്യത്തിൽ
ഞാൻ ആശ്രയിക്കുന്നു;
നീ നൽകുന്ന രക്ഷയിൽ
ഞാൻ സന്തോഷിക്കും

6
തന്ന നന്മയുടെ സമൃദ്ധിയോർത്ത്
ഞാൻ യഹോവയ്ക്കു കീർത്തനം പാടും.

ച(പ്രാഥ. ചക. വി. നമ്പ)

കരിശിൽ നിഴലിൽ ഞാൻ
 വന്നു നിലക്കണു കണ്ണി-
 ലടരാളായന്ന
 ദുഃഖവുമായെൻ നാഥാ!
 ഭൂമിയിലാകാശത്തി-
 ലെങ്ങുമേ ശോകത്തിന്റെ
 കൂരിരം നിറയുന്നു;
 താരകൾ കരയുന്നു
 തന്ത്രികൾ തകർന്ന വിൺ-
 തംബുരുവിങ്കൽക്കാല-
 മംഗുലി ചലിപ്പിക്കാ-
 തിരുന്നു മയങ്ങുന്നു!
 ഗാർത്തുര പാടേ മറ-
 നീടിന മറ്റലാവമാ-
 രാകലമിഴികളാൽ
 പ്രളയം രചിക്കുന്നു.
 എത്രയം പ്രിയമുള്ള
 പുത്രനാണിവിടെ ഏ-
 ഭക്തമിറ്റിറ്റായ വീഴ്ത്തി
 കരിശിൽ ശയിക്കുന്നു!
 കാൽവരി മലകേറി-
 ക്കിത്തരും കരളോടെ,
 കാലുകൾ വഴുതുന്ന
 നിഴലിൽ നിലക്കണു ഞാൻ.

കൃത വെട്ടിത്തിള
 ഞീടിന നയനമേ
 കാണുവാനുള്ള ചുറ്റും;
 നിന്ദ ചിന്തിടം ചുണ്ടും!
 തളൻ ഹരണ നി-
 നയരം വിടരുന്നു;
 'തരിക ജലമല'പ-
 മെങ്ങാനും ഭാഹിക്കുന്നു'.
 കിടിലംകൊള്ളും മന:-
 സാക്ഷിയോടൊരുതുള്ളി
 മിഴിനീരധരത്തിൽ
 പുരട്ടാനൊരുങ്ങവെ.
 ആണികൾ തറഞ്ഞ കൈ-
 കാലുകൾതാ'മാവിന്റെ
 പാണിയാൽത്തലോടി മാ-
 പ്പിരക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കവെ,
 ലോകമേകിയ മുളുനി-
 മകടം തിരിച്ചേറ്റ-
 വാങ്ങിയെൻ ശിരസ്സിൽത്താ-
 നണിയാൻ കൊതിക്കവെ,
 രണ്ടായിക്കീറി തിര-
 ശ്ശീലയദ്ദേവാലയ-
 മന്ദിരത്തി; ലെന്നുള്ളി-
 നുള്ളിലുമതുപോലെ! *

കർത്തവ്യം

(II)

(I)

നേരം പുലരിയായ് കാലമാം കാർമ്മികൻ
 നേരേ മറന്നിടിയജ്ഞം തുടരവേ,
 ആരാധനയ്ക്കായന്നുമപ്പള്ളിയിൽ
 ധാരാളമാളുകൾ വന്നു നിറഞ്ഞു പോയ്.

അരത്താരയിൽ തിരിനാളം ജലിച്ചിതാ
 ധൂപമുയർന്നു നൽ സംഗീതധാരയും.

'ദൈവം പരിശുദ്ധൻ' - ആചാര്യനിബന്ധായ്
 ചൊല്ലി, എല്ലാവരും ഏറ്റു ചൊല്ലിയിനാർ.
 ഭക്തി ലഹരിയിൽ മുങ്ങി ജനതതി
 സ്വർഗ്ഗമീ ഭൂമിയിലെത്തിയ മട്ടിലായ്.

(II)

ശങ്കയെന്ത്യേ ജനം പിന്നീടിടവക-
 സംഘത്തിൽ ചങ്കുപിളർക്കെ അലറവേ,
 മാറിമറിയുന്ന കാലത്തിൻ കോലത്തെ-
 നീറും മനസുമായോർത്തു പോയ് വൈദികൻ.

സംസ്കാര പൈതൃകം, ആഭിജാത്യം, വിദ്യ-
 എന്നിവയെച്ചൊല്ലി ഊറ്റം കൊള്ളുന്നവർ,
 കാളുന്ന കോപത്തിൽ കോമരം തുള്ളുന്നു
 കാളിയും കൃളിയും കുത്താടിടും വിധം.

എന്തൊരു വൈചിത്ര്യം? വൈപരീത്യം? ജന-
 മന്തരാബോധ വിഹീനരെന്നാകയാ?
 അന്തം പകച്ചുൻ നോക്കിനിന്നു, വെറും
 മനുവെപ്പോൽ മർത്യൻ താഴുന്ന കാഴ്ചയിൽ.

മാറ്റുവിൻ കാപട്യ ഭക്തി തൻ പൊയ്കാലം,
 മരണാരു ദേശത്തു പാർക്കും സഹജരേ,
 വിത്തവിദ്യതികൾ നമ്മൾക്കു നൽകിയ
 ശക്തനാം ദൈവത്തെ മുറ്റും തൃപ്തികൾനോ?

ആയിരമായിരം മൈലുകൾക്കിപ്പുറം
 മായപ്രപഞ്ചമി നാട്ടിൽ നാം കെട്ടവേ,
 പോയകാലത്തിലെ കയ്പേറും നാളുകൾ
 തീരെ മറക്കൊലാ, ദൈവ കാര്യസ്യവും.

പിന്നാലെ വന്നിടും പുത്തൻ തലമുറ-
 യ്ക്കുന്നത ജീവമാത്യക നൽകേണ്ടവർ,
 മിന്നിച്ചു തമ്മിൽ കലഹിച്ചു ശാപമി-
 മന്നിൽ ചൊരിഞ്ഞീടുക, യുക്തമോ?

കോപവും വൈരവും പാടെ വെടിഞ്ഞു നാം,
 ഏകമായ് തീരാം, ശ്രമിക്കാമൊരുമയിൽ
 നിസ്തുലമായുള്ള ക്രിസ്തുവിൻ സ്നേഹത്താൽ
 നവ്യമാം നാളയെ ഭാസുരമാക്കുവാൻ.

ഉമ്മൻ ജോർജ്ജ്

സ്റ്റാറഫോർഡ്
 ട്രൈപ്പിസ്.

A MARTHOMITE IN NORTH AMERICA

Dr. Titus Mathews, Calgary, Canada.

It is not uncommon for people to compliment me for my 'fine English names'. Such compliments used to annoy me because I felt they implied that I became a Christian recently as a result of the proselytizing efforts of western missionaries. But nowadays I use such occasions to inform those who make the comments that my name has nothing to do with the English because they are Greco-Roman names and that I have them because my family belong to the Mar Thoma Church of Malabar and to give them a long tutorial on the history of Christian Church in India,

Why do I consider myself a member of Mar Thoma Church after spending such a long time, more than three decades, more than half my life, away from India? Why do I refer to Mar Thoma Church with visible pride, when I am not an ordained priest of the Church, a member of any of its Councils or, in fact, anything other than an insignificant, ordinary person? These are the questions I want to answer through this brief article.

I was born to parents who were members of the Mar Thoma Church. They were loyal and faithful members of the Church. I grew up in a family whose church connections were exclusively with the Mar Thoma Church. I have never been to a Catholic Church or a Jacobite Church even though there were several of them in the village that I grew up in, before I went to England as a graduate student. So exclusive was my Mar Thoma upbringing that I was surprised by the close similarity of the Jacobite communion service, which I attended for the first time in London, to the Mar Thoma service. I was not taught enough of the history of the church to know that the latter came of the former!

For me, being a member of the Mar Thoma Church is no different from being part of the family into which I was born. This sense of the family is replenished when ever Bishops and priests visit us and talk about our parents, grand parents, uncles, and aunts with obvious affection. With such personal contacts, it is inevitable that we feel that we are members of an extended family. This sense of

closeness of a family membership was accentuated for me even as recently as this January when I was standing at the entrance to SC Seminary when Rev. P.C. Joseph, Rev. P.M. George, Rev. George Alexander, etc., stopped by to exchange greetings and enquire about my wife and children and others and reminisce about times we have shared long ago.

What is special about the Mar Thoma Church that I should feel proud of it, other than that it is MY church? Is it such a perfect one that I feel it is superior to all others? Far from it. There is much that goes on in the Church that makes me disappointed, sad and even annoyed at times. My purpose here is not find fault with the Mar Thoma Church or any of its members. Despite all its shortcomings, there is much that fascinates me about the Church.

I need not tell readers of the *Mar Thoma Messenger* that we are an ancient, but a reformed church, reformed not all that long ago, only a little more than 150 years. But in their zeal for modernization, the reformers did not turn back on their heritage totally. I remember a CSI priest telling how fortunate we Marthomites are for keeping faithful allegiance to our roots in history, culture and ethos of Kerala.

I do appreciate the fact that Mar Thoma Church is not a church of the extremes; it is an inclusive church, willing and able to accommodate differing view points. I admire the efforts made to ensure that its clergy is well educated and disciplined and that its bishops are broad minded enough to write about the "Universal God in Baghavat Gita" or seriously study the influence of Sri Narayanu Guru Swamy on the Kerala social scene.

I do not know of many churches which combine evangelical fervor with social consciousness as our Church does. I am really astonished at the influence this small church of membership of only a few hundred thousand has had on ecumenical movement, in particular, in the World Council of Churches and its policies relating to post colonial reconstruc-

"...Mar Thoma Church is not a church of extremes; it is an inclusive church"

tion and fighting apartheid in South Africa. Imitation, I am told, is the best form of flattery. If so, I am pleased to see other churches in Kerala adopting many initiatives that the Mar Thoma Church took first, whether it is in building primary schools or giving land to the landless or houses to the homeless. Such practices are regular bible study, retreats and group prayer meetings have been adopted by others.

Over the last twenty years, the Mar Thoma has become a global church. Whether it can maintain the extended family atmosphere, when the parishes are spread all over the globe, remains to be seen. But that is a challenge which must be faced by our bishops and clergy. When I was home recently, I could not help noticing the number of times the parish priest dropped in to say hello. In North America, people live so far apart even in urban parishes it is impractical for priests to make house visits.

There are those who believe that God has revealed himself completely and fully long ago and all the insight and knowledge gained by man during the last two thousand years are of no use. The books of the bible were written in the languages of the people of eastern Mediterranean and reflect their contemporary values and state of knowledge of the universe. There are those who attempt to interpret the modern world in terms of ideas preva-

lent in ancient times instead of the other way around. Yuhanon Marthoma Metropolitan believed that the Mar Thoma Church was 'lighted to lighten'. If the Church is to maintain its spirit of reformation alive, it must continue to examine its practices and make changes from time to time to keep itself contemporary.

In North America, we are fortunate not only with advanced technological facilities and well paying jobs, but also with tremendous opportunity to learn and to grow intellectually. When I read about the work of Dr. K.K. Kuruvilla or Dr. M.M. Thomas, I cannot help asking what contributions are we, the most fortunate of our generation who has migrated to North America, making to continued intellectual and spiritual growth of Mar Thoma Church.

Are we spending too much time in erecting or acquiring church buildings and arguing about fine points of bye-laws for Diocesan Assembly and not enough time in thinking about the mission of the Church in North America and generating a consensus about practical steps we need to take? Are we spending any efforts to see whether we can play leadership and catalytic role the Church played in India? I do not know. Unfortunately, I live too far away from New York and Houston and Chicago, to answer these question myself. May be, those closer to the scene of action can tell me and others who asks questions as I do.

Dr. Titus Mathews is a professor of Physics and Associate Vice-President at the University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada

സങ്കീർത്തനങ്ങൾ

പതിനാല്

[സംഗീതപ്രമാണിക്കു; ദാവീദിന്റെ ഒരു സങ്കീർത്തനം]

1

"ദൈവം ഇല്ല," എന്ന്
മുൻപ് ഹൃദയത്തിൽ നിരൂപിക്കുന്നു;
അവർദുഷ്ടർക്കർമ്മികളാകുന്നു;
മുട്ടിക്കൊടുക്കുന്നു;
നന്മ ചെയ്യുന്നവർ
അവരിലാരുമില്ല, ഒരാൾ പോലുമില്ല.

2

വിവേകത്തോടെ ദൈവത്തെ ആരാധിക്കുന്നവർ
ആരെങ്കിലും മുണ്ടാക്കുന്നതിനുവാൻ
സ്വർഗ്ഗത്തിൽ നിന്നു യഹോവ
മനുഷ്യരാശിയെ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു.

3

ഏവരും വഴി തെറ്റിപ്പോയവരാകുന്നു;
ദുഷ്ടർക്കർമ്മികളാകുന്നു;
നന്മ ചെയ്യുന്നവൻ ആരുമില്ല;
ഒരാൾ പോലുമില്ല.

4

യഹോവയെ വന്ദിക്കാത്ത ഇവർക്ക്,
എന്റെ ജനത്തെ
അപമെന്ന പോലെ വിഴുങ്ങിക്കളയുന്ന
ഈ ദ്രോഹികൾക്ക്
വിവേകം ഇല്ലാത്തതെന്ത്?

5

നീതിയുള്ളതലമുറയോടൊത്ത്
യഹോവവാഴുന്നതിനാൽ
അവന്റെ മുന്നിൽ ഭീതിയാൽ
അവർചകിതരായിപ്പോകും.

6

നിങ്ങൾ ദരിദ്രന്റെ സകലങ്ങളെ തകർത്തൊക്കും;
പക്ഷേ യഹോവയത്രേ അവന്റെ രക്ഷാ സങ്കേതം.

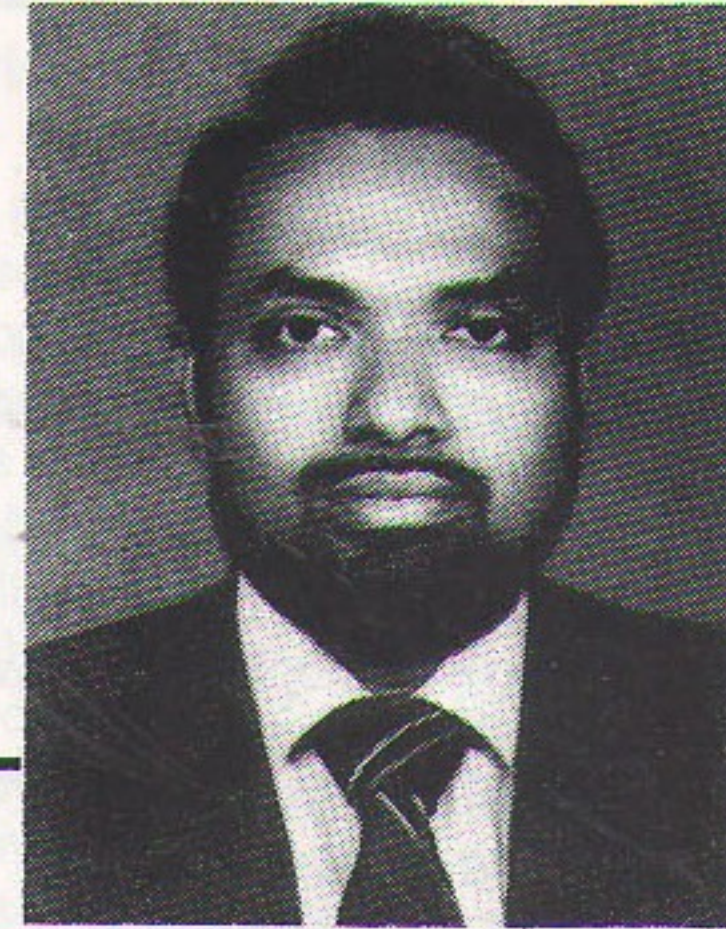
7

തിസ്രയേലിന്റെ വിടുതൽ സീയോനിൽ നിന്നു വന്നുവെങ്കിൽ
യഹോവ തന്റെ ജനത്തെ പുനരുദ്ധരിക്കുമ്പോൾ
യാക്കോബ്സന്തോഷിക്കുകയും
തിസ്രയേൽ ആനന്ദിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യും.

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VALENTINE'S DAY, 1993

(Dedicated to all the women of the world)

Dr. John Mathew, Dallas, Texas

Growing like a folded bud on the green rosebush,
then blossoming as a full-blown red rose
that sends its fragrance on the shoulders
of the light wind that passes by touching the roses;
then as a shy, shining bride on the arms of her
husband similar to the vine wrapping itself
around the sturdy oak, the king of the great trees;
like the frolicsome breeze that tickles the plants
in the flower garden, all over the house briskly
you blow your unique, sweet smell filling hearts and
minds with brimming joy just like the singing bird that
pours out its full-throated harmony in summer;
then as a caring, compassionate mother holding her
baby in kind, tender arms, lady, you are nothing but
the embodiment of self-sacrificing love, the holiest thing alive!

This being the day that is earmarked for saluting
God's favorite creature, mobile red roses, I offer
this bouquet of red roses that, I hope and pray,
will outlive nature's more opulent, brilliant red roses
that, alas, will finally die after a very short life of glory.

A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Libby Philip Mepurath, Dallas, Texas

(Inspired by her mother's dreams about the second coming of Jesus and her own dream about the subject, Libby Philip, a young High School girl from our Dallas Mar Thoma Church wrote this beautiful poem which was published in her High School Literary Magazine- Editor)

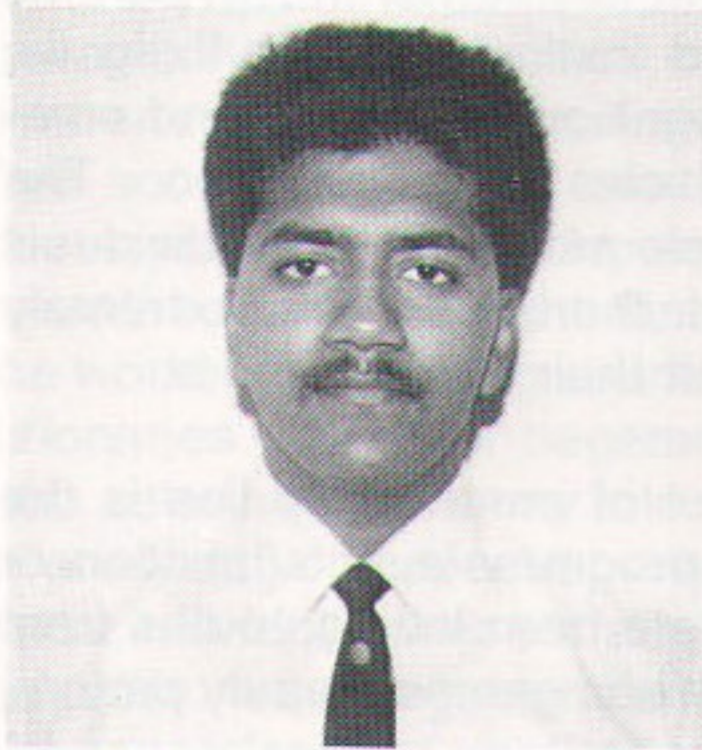
I am alone in the still of the night.
The sun has gone down and fear has
Over powered my strength
It is dark and I am alone
As I sit in this darkness, I feel fear
Fear-of what lies ahead
Watching, waiting
I wonder if I am cursed to suffer always,
For in this world have I only suffered?
Hunger grips me in his unbearable hold,
For I know not of what is yet to come.
From the midst of the darkness I see a man;
The man appears from a great light
He is now approaching me
My fear is now stronger than what it was,
Yet, now I am also feeling a sense of peace.
He sits down with me and talks to me of all
All that has happened to me.

I stare in awe of how this man could know such
things?
I turn towards him and hear his voice,
A voice so strong, but yet so caring.
It fills my heart with strength and love
And then he speaks of this world:
He says to me that in this world we will suffer
And in this life there will be many problems.
But he tells me of a bright future,
A future which will occur when he will come back,
And when he comes, he will come to judge
Blessing to those who are just-and punishing
those who were not
In this future he promises eternal peace and love
Peace and love, a world of total bliss
So now I wait
Wait for he-he who is the light,
The light that has lighted up my darkness.

MAR THOMA XENOPHOBIAS

The Deconstruction of the Indian American Scenario

Simon Ninan, Teaneck, N.J.



erudition, a great degree of political and intellectual tolerance and vast hordes of opportunities beyond compare!

In the pop album *12 Inches of Snow*, the "Snowman" in his hip-hop house reggae debut sings about the 'Informer.' We Indian Americans must also be informed of our respective human condition, experience and nature. Many of our youths feel isolated and alienated from the American society because our parents presents to us a stumbling block and not to mention a formidable challenge. This should not be the case because America fosters a sense of "rugged individualism," will to life, competition, striving, change, the will to power and et al ideologies. These particular factors come into conflict with our parents Indian upbringing, heritage and culture.

However, from a conflict perspective, we can focus on our differences (like the tension among us) and bring about progress and advancement for our unique Indian American community. There are many myths, misconceptions and facades that plague the existence of our intra and infra structures especially between parents and youths that need to be eradicated or shall we say ironed out. We shall look into ways that shatter the over-protectionistic shell parents impose upon youths, how parents and youths can foster self-independence and how we can centralize the aim of our myriad number of Indian organizations, churches, federations, temples, mosques, associations, clubs, groups, ecumenical societies, media outlets, general bodies, professional circles and

Indian American youths are extremely lucky and fortunate to be living in industrialized Western nations like U.S.A., Canada and the U.K. because these countries offer a countless number of opportunities for self advancement, independent study for the

cliques. When a group so called unifies itself it also divides itself from the society at large.

First and foremost, there is a burning desire, intense consensus and demand among youths to shatter the over-protectionistic shell our parents dictate on us. Parents must understand that this security sanction might have worked for their generation in the past but it does not work well for youths. This sort of closed circuit upbringing might be suitable in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh but it does not hit homeruns in the Western World. Youths will not hesitate to resist the traditional system because it is very foreign to us and our American value system. On the other side of the coin, it does not mean that youths born or brought up in the States will forget about Indian customs, rituals and traditions; we respect them sincerely! It also does not necessarily mean that we have to follow them either because in the new world we treasure our freedom of choice, religion, speech, assembly, press etc.

This excess of parental authoritative control must be eradicated because it is maladaptive to society.

Youths should stand up for their rights and parents should make this transition easier for us. Parents can allow their children a greater sense of autonomy and freedom. Youths captive to the over-protectionistic shell sanctioned by our parents will become more rebellious without a cause, highly resistant to punishment/discipline and will end up as non-productive citizens or permanent immigrants. Parents will be surprised by their children if they let them become more independent because they will turn out to be more likely than not as positive role-models, influential leaders and fruitful Indian

members of the American society.

The reason why parents hesitate allowing their children freedoms is because of fear. Many guardians feel that they will lose their children to the perils of society like teenage pregnancy, statutory rape, drugs, alcohol, excessive cruising, arcades, gambling, excessive partying, drop-outs, apathy, depression, suicide, homicide, crime etc. However,

"Youths will not hesitate to resist the traditional system because it is very foreign to us..."

this is far from the truth because the positive aspects far outweigh the negative consequences of reality. Our children can go nowhere without struggling, striving through this mad world of ours. These experiences allow youths to become someone important and special.

Much of our problems centers around the programs, events, people our youths want to go to or visit. Parents often discourage youths from going to these places or to meet certain individuals or characters because they usually have a pre-conceived, prejudiced, biased highly subjective and suspicious opinion of it or them. This is not "cool" or justified because it forces us youths back into a shell or shall we say makes us run right into imaginary brick walls. The time is now for us to take a closer examination at the issue at hand and come out with better conclusions. Parents must come to terms with the fact that what appears to be on the surface as "Radical," "Crazy," "Dangerous," and "Stupid" to them is in actuality just quite simply "Normal," "Average," "Mediocre" and "Mundane" to youths.

So what are some of these "normal" events you ask? Well some youths would just like to simply "hang out" with their friends without worrying what their parents might think about them. Our parents should not see the gender, sexual preferences, ethnic backgrounds of our friends but see them for who they are. Many parents worry about letting their children "hanging out" with non-Asian-Indian human beings because they fear the loss of their children to negative influences like peer pressure, excessive playing, excessive cruising, sexual experimentation etc.

This is not functional because parents should come to trust their children and respect our friends as human beings instead of imposing ethnic classifications only to incite racism, bigotry, hatred and explicit or subtle prejudice. Both parents and youths got to have the right attitude and look participate in world love. Money does not make the world go around, but love most certainly does. Remember if our children will become one, it simply means that they enjoy social interaction by engaging in free conversation.

We are no way suggesting that our parents should not step in; because they have every right to

do so when they are justified in doing so such as when children take to role-modeling extreme characters like Adolf Hitler, Fidel Castro or groups like the mafia, Khemer Rouge, cults or the KKK. In general parents should trust their youths first and not the rumors they hear from other Indian parents or from their so called instincts. Everything we know is learned via cognition, language and emotion which are the vehicles of socialization. The chances our children role-modelling evil individuals is extremely rare and, therefore, it is extremely wise for parents to trust their children more.

Another great facet of controversy lies is the attendance of certain programs/events/function or parties. Parents hesitate from letting youths from going to the parties, athletic games, beauty parlors, arcade halls, recreation centers, musical concerts, prep rallies, sweet sixteen, the mall, gyms, health centers, museums, cultural shows, talent shows, fashion shows, bar mitzaths, barbecues, picnics, cruising, dancing, conferences, clubs, extra-curricular activities and et al because they fear that we youths will lose the "Indian In Us". Some parents also believe that something bad is going to happen at these places/events. These far-fetched notions are a farce, if anything its vice versa is true. When our parents severely prohibit our attendance to events/places this is nothing more than acts of detachment, isolation and excommunication from society at large.

"If our parents
continue to
quarantine us
we will then
definitely loose
"Indian In us!"

If our parents continue to quarantine us we will then definitely loose "Indian In us!" Youths will not lose our common and great Indian heritage, customs, beliefs or ideology simply by attending events or going places but instead we can only contribute what is Indian about us to the mainstream. We youths will share our roots with others, if only our parents give us the okay to go to programs and or places.

How you might ask? Well our youths will see the multi-cultural advantage around them and fully contribute our distinct culture as well. By experiencing the world first hand via our senses youths will go on a quest to find out more about their particular cultural niche albeit India, Pakistan, Bangladesh or Sri Lanka. Youths will not become abused by going to the discoteche or become conformed by going to a football game. The only consideration parents and youths have to do is to

make sure to do all things in moderation.

Secondly, parents and youths must seek to foster the development of the independent self. This world is clearly hegemonic so much so that we must come to the realization that the author of our behaviors is society. Once we come to this pristine awareness that we are not who we think we are and that society is us, we can move forward in the development of the independent self. But in the meantime, we can fight the hegemonic nature of the world by becoming counter hegemonic or revolutionaries. Counter-hegemonic individual is one who sets the hegemony into crisis by being critical or analyzing component parts. Revolutionaries are those individuals who estrange themselves from the hegemony and stress change via revolution. This quest for the independent self is very much the labor of the negative, but it is one tragedy of development we Indian Americans/Canadians/Europeans have to go on.

Last but not least, we Indian Americans/Canadians/Europeans must seek to centralize the aims, roles, priority of the myriad number of Indian institutions via ICE TEA. At first you might be thinking how are we going to centralize Indian organizations with Lipton or 4C iced tea, but Ice Tea is a acronym that stands for Indian Cultural and Educational Task force Enriching America. One might fruitfully argue that this is already the aim of most Indian groups. Perhaps, but the question at hand is how much so, to what degrees and to what end ??? We Indians cannot go on simply holding receptions, parties, talent shows, fashion shows, conferences, seminars for a majority of Non Resident Indians and a few distinguished American V.I.Ps. Instead, we Indians show make an effort in inviting the advantage American Joe Six-pack and company to our programs, because it is they who need training, not some know it all about Indian VIP who takes pride in exploiting our resources and /or facilities.

In this light we are well on our way on becoming equal Indian members of the American mainstream and not just a MINORITY. Our numbers are getting larger in the USA, Canada and the U.K. and we can go no longer pretending to be productive. WE MUST STRIVE TO ACT, REACT AND BE ON THE

CONSTANT PURSUIT FOR EXCELLENCE. We Indians must seek to integrate with the American Society.

There is a social time bomb waiting to explode our common Indian heritage, history and ideology. The force of assimilation is counter productive because it washes down our unique Indian heritage. However, this does not mean there is no solution because integration of our values with that of industrialized nations is possible and adaptive to society. There are fundamental ways that we can integrate our background to help others in this society. We must realize that there are many social problems, dilemmas facing other ethnic races. We Indians can not remain aloof because of our affluent condition and status in society. We must use our resources to help other people regardless of their ethnic composition.

“Indian
Americans
have to take a
stand against
injustices against
our people...”

Indian Americans must seek to re-tell India's history to our youngsters and to the American Society. We have to make more literature in translation available and we have to write more books about India by Indians via the American press and media. Indian American newspapers can make its pages available to the re-telling of histories, current controversies and a wider array of public letters

to the editors; opinions and viewpoints sections.

We Indian Americans have to take a stand against injustices against our people albeit racism, bigotry or hate crimes. We cannot remain aloof, but we can use passive resistance, political action committee pressures, lobbying, filing police reports and to inquire for governmental protection.

We Indian parents and youths must seek to learn more about ourselves, India, USA, Canada, and the world in depth. We youths must not only have discourse with others but also be able to come up with our own Indian American dialectical. We youths must be able to synthesize the Sitar of India and Gandhi's spectacles with the electric guitar Henry David Thoreau's call of the woodchuck to be non-conformists in order to find and construct our identity. Sure life is a construct, but our Indian American identity is fundamentally up to your creative output and not to mention biotic potential.

Simon Ninan is a member of the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Youth Fellowship, Yonkers, N.Y. and an undergraduate student majoring in Sociology at Hofstra University, Hempstead, N.Y.

THE TRIUMPHANT JOURNEY OF JESUS TO JERUSALEM

Lynn Zacharia, Iowa



Rejoice people of Zion - shout for joy people of Jerusalem. Look your king is coming to you. He comes triumphant and victorious but humble and riding on a donkey (Zech. 9:9), Matt. 21:8-10 says a

very large crowd spread their clothes on the road and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds were shouting, "Hosanna" the son of David,

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord".

To me Jesus' triumphant journey to Jerusalem is very special. I feel happy to say Hosanna to the King. As a Christian child Hosanna means "save us now". We are in trouble and need help. People in Jesus' time looked for a savior.

We shout Hosanna because we believe in Jesus and we can shout Hosanna when troubles, worries, problems and pain affect our lives. We can cry for help, because He loves us. He died for us and for our sins. Pray to Him always. He is coming again to save us from this troubled world to start the kingdom of Heaven.



by Lynn Zacharia

MAR THOMA YOUTH FROM IOWA AS A VOLUNTEER IN KERALA

Miss Minnie Alexander, Camp Kerala



(This is the second of the three-part series from Minnie Alexander, a 22 year old Mar Thoma youth from Urbandale, Iowa who spent over four months in Kerala as a volunteer at various Mar Thoma institutions.)

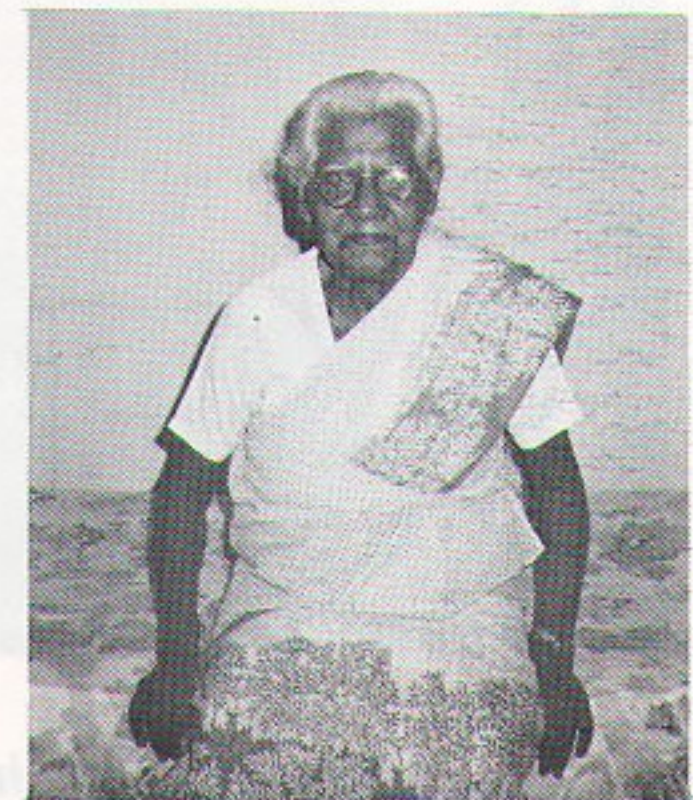
December 6, 1992, was an infamous day in Indian history. On that day, thousands of Kar Sevaks destroyed the 464 year old Babri Masjid Mosque in Ayodhya. It was the climatic result of days of political maneuvering and anxious waiting as thousand of Hindu fundamentalists streamed into the holy city. According to these people and their supporters, the mosque was built upon the ruins of the Hindu temple commemorating the birthplace of Lord Ram which had been destroyed by the Moghuls after their conquest of India. To right the past aggression and domination by Moslem rulers as well as to fuel the fire of Hindu fundamentalism, the Barathiya Janata Party (BJP) called upon Hindus to destroy the mosque and build a temple on that site. The ruling Congress (I) party essentially said, in the words of my grandfather, C.C. Chacko, "Nothing Doing." However they didn't take the necessary precautions to prevent the tragedy. In fact, many believe that the Narasimha Rao government gave tacit approval to the Kar Sevaks by leaving the situation under the control of the Uttar Pradesh State government which at the time was headed by Kalyan Singh, a member of the BJP. Ultimately, the mosque was torn down with hammers, stones, and bare hands. Needless to say, the fallout of the incident was far reaching with riots and demonstrations throughout India. And how did these events affect me in Kerala?

It was certainly exciting and a little frightening to be in India during these turbulent times. The next few days were declared as Bandh and it was a little frightening to be in India during these turbulent times. The next few days were declared as Bandh in response to the turmoil in Ayodhya. A strange stillness enveloped the normally bustling city of Tiruvalla. Actually, the nationwide strike gave me a wonderful opportunity to get to know the residents of Visrandi Bhavan, the hostel where I stayed. The women I spoke with told me that, as Christians, they were a minority in India and that only a secular state would ensure their basic rights. At first, it seemed strange

to hear these words because as a minority in the U.S. I assumed that India would be the place where I would be part of the mainstream. Sometimes, my relatives ominously warn me that my situation in America is tenuous; as a person of color, I have no stake in a Eurocentric (white) nation. But like these young women who are concerned about their future as minorities, but do not question their sense of belonging in India, I know where I belong. It has less to do with my exterior trappings like race or religion, and more to do with my inner sense of home.

Although the Ayodhya situation and its implication preoccupied my thoughts during my stay at Vanitha Manddiram Center, there was plenty of time to discuss and experience other things as well. Visrandi Bhavan, the place where I stayed is two homes in one. The upper level of the building is a hostel for young women who have come to Tiruvalla from various parts of Kerala to work or study. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting and getting to know people of my own age as we shared photographs and stories with one another. I realized that although there are many differences between us, essentially, we are all looking a little anxiously towards the future and trying our best not to let those worries interfere too much with good times in the present.

The lower is a home for retired women workers of the church. These women have devoted their lives to the work of the church and have many stories to tell about their adventures in various institutions throughout India. One of the women, Ms. Mariam Samuel, was born in 1900 and graduated from Women's Christian College in Madras when she was 23. Little did she know that "God's Plan" would take her to the villages of Bengal where she was an evangelist for



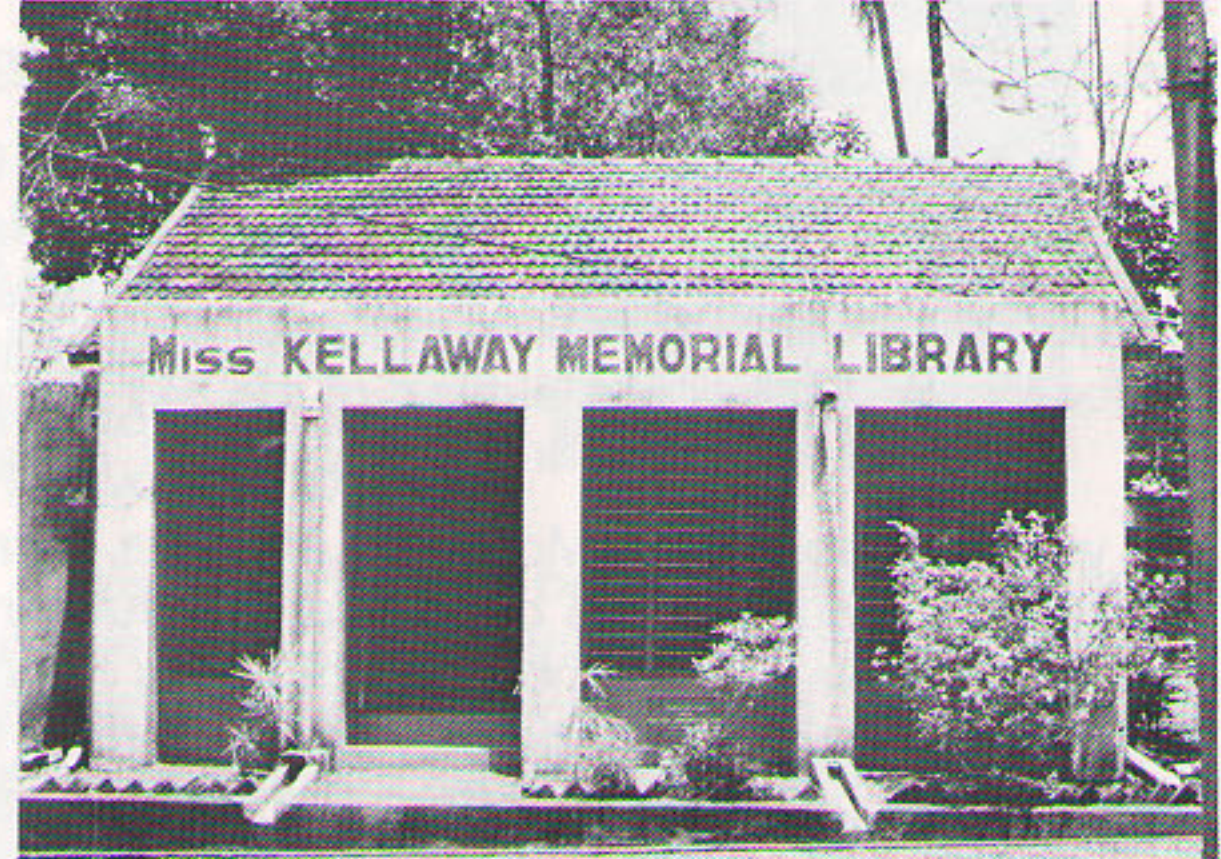
Miss Mariam Samuel

about eight years. Throughout her life, she had traveled and learned much. She even studied in England at a time when the journey took 21 days by ship and Indians were forced to remain in the areas reserved for coloreds. Ms. Samuel has a strong faith in God's will and the guidance of the Holy Spirit and so looks back on her life with no regrets. She has seen the origins and growth of Sevika Sanghom and

vention. It is said that the inspiration came from a Thirumeni who had just returned from the United States excited about what he had seen in the American Suffrage movement and the contributions of women to social causes. His contact with Ms. Kandamma Varghese who was very active in the church brought together an idea and a pioneer to begin an organization that has made many contribu-



Students at Vanitha Mandiram Center.



Library at VMC for young women

was in charge of the Vanitha Mandiram Training Center for several years.

Sevika Sanghom, an organization of Mar Thoma women was founded in 1919 at the Maramon Con-

tions to society. Salem Bhavan started in 1923 as the first project of Sevika Sanghom. It provides a home for orphaned children many of whom are rejected by their parents because of their illegitimate birth. About 1/4 out of 120 have been placed in homes after



Bread baking in process



Bindu who is a B.Com. student with a newcomer to Salem orphanage

coming to Salem. One of the children who remained under the care of the church is now pursuing a B.Com degree with the help of an international sponsor, Anne Mamutil (Sydney, Australia). I particularly enjoyed spending time in the nursery with the babies, but I always felt a little sad when I thought about the difficulties that lie ahead for them.

Right next door to Salem Bhavan is the Vanitha Mandiram Training Center for Young Women which was started in 1925. Originally, its purpose was to train young women to become evangelists, but now many women simply come to learn about their faith and religious tradition. About eight of the thirty students are planning on becoming workers for the church. The rest of the young women come to share an unforgettable experience of Christian education and fellowship with other students from various parts of India. They have even had second generation Americans come for a short course.

On the same compound, there are several projects Sreejana Vikasana Samithi (SVS), the development organization within Sevika Sanghom. It provides training and employment in a tailoring school,

a printing press, a curry powder manufacturing unit, and a bakery. The women do hard work, skillfully utilizing tools that seem outdated to me. For example, huge brick ovens are used in the bakery. Coconut Husks are burned in the oven until the walls are so hot that the buns are fully baked in a matter of minutes. It goes without saying that the work is very taxing, especially in the oven-like climate of Kerala. However, there is still a wonderful camaraderie among the young women which they shared with me despite my poor Malayalam. Now, when I look back on my experience at the Vanitha Mandiram Institutions in Tiruvalla, it's those good feelings that I remember and of course the bus trip home.

There were about 200 people in a bus that would only seat 70 in the States. As I squeezed my way through the crowd, I realized that I didn't need to hold onto any thing to support myself because the tightly packed bodies around me held me upright. Every now and then, I thought the bus might tip over as it careened over the narrow, winding roads. I started to breathe a little easier as the bus slowly emptied. Then I looked down to see the road passing under me through the rotting floor boards. But that's just life in Kerala.

ചെറിയാൻ കെ. ചെറിയാൻ

പതിനഞ്ച്

[ദാവീദിന്റെ ഒരു സങ്കീർത്തനം]

1

യഹോവേ, നിന്റെ കൃപാഭരണത്തിൽ
ആർക്കുപാർക്കാനാവും?
നിന്റെ വിശുദ്ധദൂർഗ്ഗത്തിൽ
ആർക്കുനിവസിക്കാനാവും?

2

അകളങ്കം നന്മ ചെയ്യുന്നവൻ,
ഹൃദയപൂർവ്വം സത്യം ഭാഷിക്കുന്നവൻ,

3

നാവുകൊണ്ടു ഭുഷണം പറയാത്തവൻ,
കൃത്യകാരണദ്രോഹിക്കാത്തവൻ,
അയൽക്കാരനെ അപമാനിക്കാത്തവൻ,

4

ദുർമ്മർദ്ദിയെ നിന്ദനെന്നു കരുതുന്നവൻ,
യഹോവാ ഭക്തരെ ആദരിക്കുന്നവൻ,
സത്യത്താൽ ചേതം വന്നാലും
ധർമ്മത്തിൽ വ്യതിചലിക്കാത്തവൻ,

5

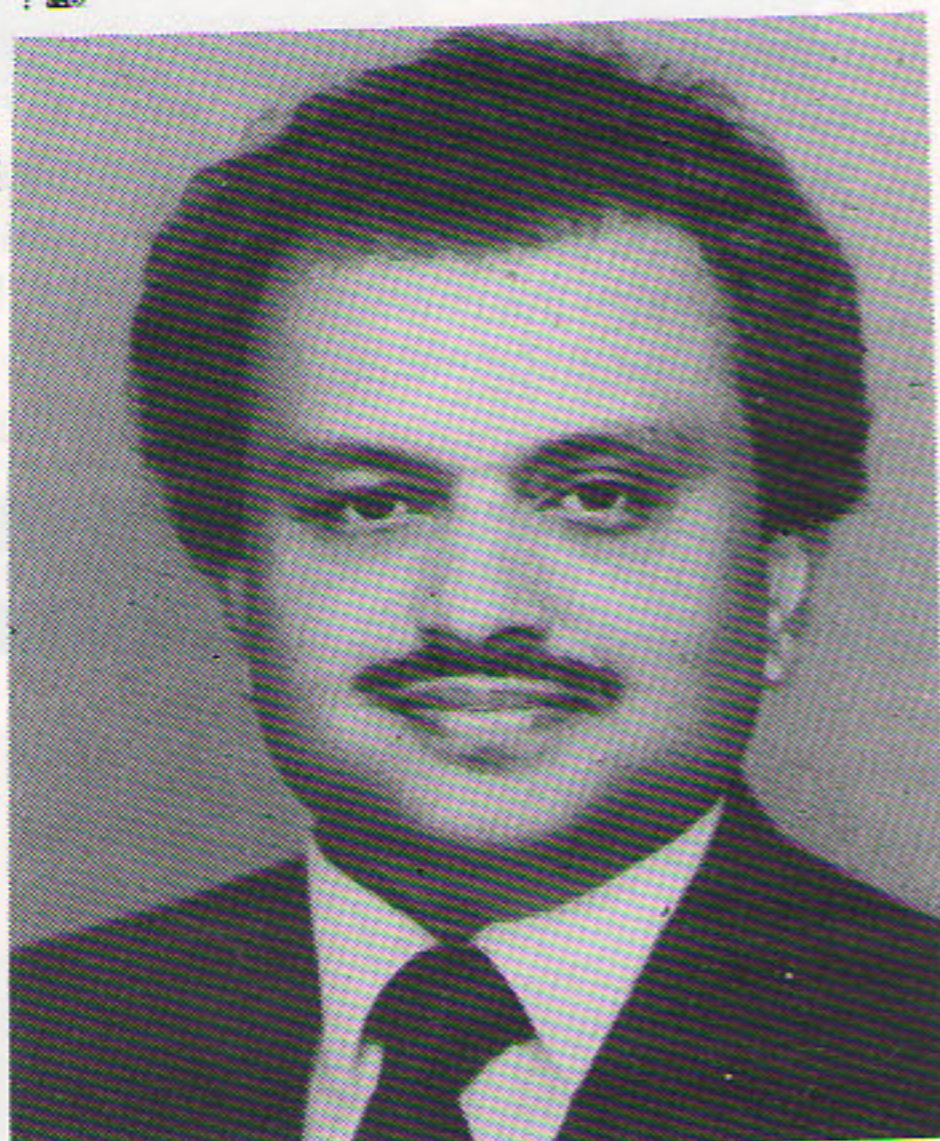
ദ്രവ്യം പരിശയ്ക്കു കൊടുക്കാത്തവൻ,
നിരപരാധിക്കെതിരേ കോപവാങ്ങാത്തവൻ;
അങ്ങനെയുള്ളവൻ അവിടെ നിവസിക്കും;
അവനൊരിക്കലും ഉഷിക്കാതിരിക്കാനാവില്ല.



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GUARANTEED VICTORY

Dr. George P. Alexander, Pasadena, California

Jesus said to His disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). When one is truly born of the spirit, there is victory over the world. Jesus lived on this earth in a body like our bodies, sin apart, and He conquered the flesh, the world, the devil, death, hell and the grave. And because of this, the believer overcomes the world with its customs, its darkness and its ungodliness.

Dear reader, it is a tremendous thing to be a child of God. We have assurance that the relationship between the believer and God guarantees victory. The believer belongs to God, God belongs to the believer. There may be times when it seems that we are the only person in our community who is truly saved, and therefore we think we face the opposition of the enemy alone, but be not discouraged, for every believer together with God forms a majority over any crowd. We, who are born again believers, know that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose. When all things are added up, we will see that whatever has happened to us from the day we were born again until the day we look into His precious face, was for our good and God's glory. Every true believer is predestined to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, and therefore whatsoever happens to the believer is allowed to happen in order to mould and make him into that image (Romans 8: 29-30).

Guaranteed victory is ours because "greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world". The Holy Spirit within us is greater than the spirit of Antichrist in the world around us. God is greater than the devil

and all the demons of hell combined. The demons have always recognized Jesus as God's Son, but demons cannot be saved. We cannot conquer Satan in our own power, but Jesus met him face to face and defeated him. He said, "Get thee hence, Satan," and that ended it. Satan obeyed and moved on. Never go to the door when Satan knocks. Call on Jesus and He will send Satan away.

The reason some professing Christians cannot overcome the world, the flesh and the devil is because they have never exercised faith in God into salvation. They joined a church and embraced a "religion" but they were never born again by faith in the finished work of Jesus. They have their names on a church roll, but they do not possess the new nature through the miracle of the new birth by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is just as natural for the unregenerate person to go after the worlds as it is for a pig to eat corn or for a sheep to eat tender grass.

The only person who can possibly live a Christian life and overcome the flesh and the world is the person who is born of God; and the only way to be born of God is to believe on His Son, Jesus Christ, and have faith in His shed blood and finished work. Those are the only ones who overcome this world and live dedicated, consecrated, Christian lives providing themselves assets to the Kingdom of God, rather than bringing reproach upon the name of Jesus.

The most miserable person on earth is the back-slidden Christian.

For Sale – Real Estate – Flats in Bangalore

Two 1800 Sq. Ft. (approximate) flats are available, near Mekheri Circle in Bangalore. Each can be divided into two flats, and floor plans can be altered as desired by buyer. Mar Thoma Christian would prefer Marthomites as co-owners of building. Please inquire: Mr. C.A. Thomas (818) 894-0211.

NEWS FROM DIOCESE/PARISHES

THE CHOSEN ONE

Rajan T. Theverukadan, Edmonton, Canada



Rev. Joseph Jacob has been serving as the vicar of our parishes in Edmonton, Calgary and Ft. McMurry for over three years. He is also a member of the Diocesan Council. When the news came that Josekutty achen has been selected along with two other achen to become a Bishop of the Mar

Thoma Church pending final approval from Mandalam, all of us were elated. His simplicity, his loyalty to the church, his deep faith in the living God, his concern for the needy and the unfortunate ones and the quiet but unassuming nature of his character have all earned him respect and love from his parishioners.

Josekutty achen was born on September 8, 1949 in a well-known Mar Thoma family - Elakkattu Katuppil, Anchery, Kerala. Achen's parents are late Mr. E.V. Jacob and Mrs. Saramma Jacob. Achen is the youngest of seven children. He has three brothers and three sisters. Achen's eldest brother is the Rev. E.J. George, now the Director of Drug Addict Center in Malayalapuruzha. Kochamma, Dr. Soppie George is working with achen at the center.

Second brother Mr. E.J. Jacob is the Physical Education Director in Calicut University - now in Chicago. Third brother Mr. A.E. Jacob is working in ICI, Calcutta. Achen's oldest sister Ammini Jacob is married to Mr. P.C. Jacob, Panampunnayil. Second sister Molly John, is married to Rev. John John, Santa Cruz, Bombay. The youngest one, Ammal, is married to Bertie and lives in San Francisco.

Josekutty achen completed his high school education from St. George's High School in Puthuppally. He was active in scouting, Bala Jana Sakyam and other youth activities. He was interested in music and reading. Even from a very young age, he was involved with church activities. He started assisting in the church at the age of 12 and at the age of 18, he was the parish Secretary. He took his pre-degree from Basalios College in Kottayam and his bachelor degree from C.M.S. College, Kottayam. During his college days, he was very active with student conferences, and various other youth activities.

His long time ambition and dream of becoming an achen was fulfilled when he joined the Bishops College, Calcutta, for his theological studies. As a boy, he used to play the game Achen wearing white clothes and acting like an achen. All the good qualities developed through family, church and friends, helped him to become a deacon on May 29, 1976. He was ordained by Bishop Iraneous. That was Thirumeni's first ordination. On June 12, 1976, he was ordained as a priest by the late Thomas Thirumeni in Christos, Anchery. After ordination, he was sent to Chengaroth, Calicut as parish priest. Josekutty achen was also in charge of four other parishes around that area. Due to lack of transportation facility, he had to walk miles and miles to visit the homes of the parishioners. Thereafter, he served as parish priest in Bombay, Madras and many other places in Kerala. During his service, he worked hard to build churches and parsonages in different parts of Kerala especially in Thalappady and Anakulam.

It was on a sunny afternoon of September 24, 1989 that Josekutty achen landed at the International airport in Edmonton, Canada. Even though, Edmonton Marthomites had a prayer group from November 1974, other areas like Ft. McMurry, Calgary, Winnipeg, Vancouver needed well organized prayer groups. Achen visited these areas, met our people and organized regular prayer groups. In addition to Edmonton, we have now parishes in Calgary and Ft. McMurry.

After having met in rented places for over 17 years for worship services and fellowship, it was like a dream come true when we had our first Holy Communion Service on June 30, 1991 at our own church in Edmonton. The efforts put in by Josekutty achen towards this goal were exemplary. As a parishioner and a friend, I have seen his courage and dedication in the most difficult and tragic circumstances such as the time when our church burned down in January of 1992. The members were devastated by this loss, but Josekutty achen was firm in his conviction that something good would come out of this loss and that the living God would not forsake them. He comforted the members and slowly started towards building a new and better church building in its place. The building was ready in record time and the church was rededicated on July 4, 1992.

Apart from building up a strong relationship between the Marthomites in and around Edmonton, Josekutty achen also built up commendable relationship between

our sister churches and Canadian churches. During his travel to different places in North America, he had the opportunity to meet different people, learn from them, and share his experience and knowledge with them. Josekutty achen along with Mr. C.J. Cherian recently translated 'The Royal Court Judgment 1892'. He is currently enrolled as a student in the University of Alberta for the D.Min program.

Achen's life was moulded from the beginning by his mother's love, belief, prayer and deep faith in God. Mother was the key figure in his life for all his achievements as he lost his father early in his childhood days. Rev. E.J. George, his eldest brother is a friend, brother and father to him. Achen was also inspired by many great people in and out of Mar Thoma Church such as our great Metropolitan, late Yuhananon Mar Thoma, late Mathews Mar Athanasius, Sadhu Mathai of Manganam etc.

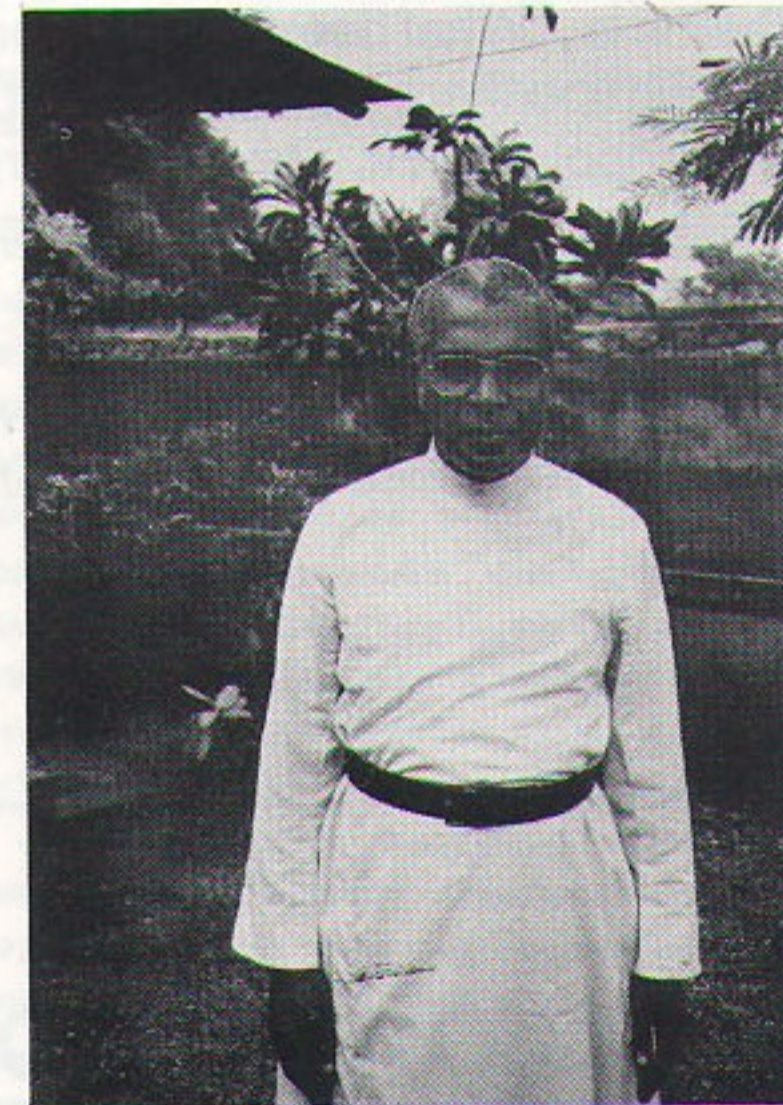
May I take this opportunity with my family and friends all over North America to wish Josekutty achen all success and abundant blessings from God as he enters a new phase of his life with added responsibilities and commitment.



Rev. Joseph Jacob

THOMAS MAR ATHANASIOUS MEMORIAL LECTURES

The Rev. Dr. M.V. Abraham, Principal, Mar Thoma Theological Seminary, Kottayam will be giving Thomas Mar Athanasius Memorial Lectures at different centres in our diocese from the second week of May 1993 through the second week of June 1993. According to the tentative schedule, Abraham Achen will be in Los Angeles from May 7-9 where the parish convention is also combined with the memorial lectures. He will be in Edmonton, Canada on the 9th and 10th May. He will give a talk to the Assembly members at the forthcoming Diocesan Assembly meeting in New Jersey and also at the Long Island Mar Thoma Church and St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church in New York on May 14, 15 and 16, 1993. Lectures are also planned for in Philadelphia during the week end of the 22nd of May and in Houston the week-end of May 29th. After visiting Dallas parish on June 5th & 6th, he is scheduled to speak at the Chicago Mar Thoma Church on June 12th and 13th after which, he would return to Kerala.



Rev. Dr. M.V. Abraham

EASTERN REGIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

The Spring Mar Thoma Eastern Regional Youth Conference was hosted by the Philadelphia Mar Thoma Youth League on March 20, 1993. The theme of the conference was "BACK IN THE HANDS OF THE MAKER" focusing on the parables - The Prodigal Son and the Two House Builders. The meeting was led by Dave and Shannon Lamb, staff workers for the Inter-varsity Christian Fellowship at

the University of Pennsylvania, and was attended by more than 350 youths. At the Conference many youths chose to share and dedicate their lives to the Lord. Those who have never known Him, those who have wandered away from Him, and those who have deliberately left Him, we pray that they have found themselves back in the Father's hands through the conference.

Sajini Mathew (Secretary)

MAR THOMA SUNDAY SCHOOL SENIOR STUDENTS CONFERENCE.

For the past nine years, the Mar Thoma Junior Students' Conference has been conducted for the students in grades 6-12. Due to the growing number of participants, a decision was made during the Eastern Regional Teachers' Meeting last September to divide the Conference and have a Junior and Senior Conference. The Bethel Mar Thoma Sunday School accepted the request to host the Senior Conference.

K.S. Abraham, Secretary (215-677-8253)

This will be the first Senior Students' Conference and the participants will range from students entering 10th to 12th grade this September. It will be held at Beaver College, Glenside, PA (5 miles west of Philadelphia) from Friday July 16 to Sunday July 18, 1993. We request the parents to encourage youth in their parishes to participate in this conference and also to remember this conference in their prayers.

John Kunchandy, Superintendent (215-676-4929)

MAR THOMA FAMILY CONFERENCE OF NORTH AMERICA & U.K.

The eleventh Mar Thoma Conference of North America & U.K. will be held from July 1-4, 1993 at the McLean Hilton at Tysons Corner, McLean, Virginia. The Conference theme is, "What does the Lord require of you?" (Micah 6:8) Main speakers are Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan, Rt. Rev. GeeVarghese Mar Athanasius Episcopa and Rev. Dr. Dennis T. Olson, Professor, Princeton Theological Seminary.

The Conference flyer along with registration forms are available from your local church vicar/secretary.

Special arrangements for a luncheon cruise aboard the "Spirit of Washington" at the historic Potomac River, followed by sight-seeing tour in the Nation's capital, including the Air and Space Museum, from 9.30 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. on July 1, 1993 is arranged for those who are interested.

Registration deadline is May 15, 1993. For details of registration, sight-seeing tour, conference fees etc. please contact Mr. Thomas Koshy, Conference Secretary at 301-977-9192.

Dr. Thomas Ninan, Chair, Public Relations.

FELLOWSHIP OF MAR THOMA PHYSICIANS AND DENTISTS OF NORTH AMERICA

The second annual meeting and retreat of the Fellowship of Mar Thoma Physicians and Dentists of North America will be held August 6, 7 & 8, 1993 at the Allentown College of Saint Frances de Sales, 2755 Center Valley, PA located in the scenic Lehigh Valley in northeastern Pennsylvania. All Christian physicians, dentists, medicals and dental students, interns, residents, fellows and their families are invited to come together for this Christian fellowship to worship together and receive the spiritual power to guide us through our healing ministry. One of our Bishops is expected to lead the conference.

Please mark these dates and call one of us for registration and more information.

Dr. Thomas Abraham (201)670-8126
Dr. Alex Thomas (215)868-1879
Mr. Samuel Abraham (201)666-9270

A half day retreat and fellowship will be held at the St. Peters' Mar Thoma Church, Teaneck, New Jersey on May 1, 1993 from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Suffragan Metropolitan will be leading the fellowship meeting.

MAR THOMA CHURCH OF BOSTON

Mar Thoma Church, Boston, organized a send-off party for Rev. Dr. K.U. Abraham on the 31st of Jan. 1993. Rev. Sathi Clarke (C.S.I. Church) presided over the function. Rev. Dr. Abraham Thomas (St. Stephens Knanya Church) Rev. K.G. Philipose (St. Mary's Orthodox Church) Rev. Fr. Peter Edappilly and several others representing Edavalka Sangham, Sunday School, Sevika Sanghom, Youth, Malayalam Association etc. spoke. Rev. Dr. K.U. Abraham introduced the new vicar of the Boston Mar Thoma Church, Rev. Alexander M. Issac to the gathering.

Alex Thomas, Boston

MAR THOMA CHURCH OF LOS ANGELES

During the Passion week, we had services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Rev. Ninan Jacob of the Church of South India gave messages during Thursday and Friday services. Rt. Rev. Oliver Garver, Suffragan Bishop of the Episcopal Church (Retd), Los Angeles Diocese, was the guest speaker on Easter Sunday. After the Easter Service, Sunday School children participated in a singing program. Bishop Garver then distributed certificates to all the winners of the Talents & Arts competition held on February 27, 1993.

Our Youth are involved in a Recycling program. They collect items that could be recycled, from houses and the proceeds from the sale are given for the maintaining of the Sunday School facilities.

കുരിശ് ഉണർത്തുന്ന വെല്ലുവിളികൾ

Reprinted from Sabha Tharaka - April '93

യേശുക്രിസ്തു കുരിശിൽ മരിച്ച ദിനത്തെ എന്തു കൊണ്ട് 'Good Friday' എന്ന് വിളിക്കുന്നു? ആദ്യ ശിഷ്യന്മാർ ആ ദിവസത്തെ അന്ന് അങ്ങനെ കണ്ടില്ല. അവരെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് അതൊരു കൊലപാതകമായിരുന്നു. അവരുടെ പ്രതീക്ഷകൾ അറ്റപോയ ദിവസമാണ്. ഏകിലും നമെന്തിന് ഈ ദിവസത്തെ കൊണ്ടാടുന്നു? നമ്മുടെ ദൈവം ലയങ്ങളിൽ ഏറ്റവും അധികം ആളുകൾ തടിച്ചുകൂടുന്നത് ടു:ഖവെള്ളിയാഴ്ചയാണ്. യേശു ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ മരണം ലോകത്തെ രൂപാന്തരപ്പെടുത്തിയ വിശ്വാസത്തിനും പ്രത്യാശയ്ക്കും എങ്ങനെ ജന്മദേഹി?

ക്രിസ്തുമാർഗ്ഗം, ലോകത്തിൽനിന്ന് മാറിനിൽക്കാനോ ലഭിക്കാനോ സമാധാനത്തെക്കുറിച്ചോ, വിജയകരമായ ലോകജീവിതത്തെക്കുറിച്ചോ പറയുന്നില്ല, എന്നാൽ അത് സ്നേഹത്തിന്റെ വിജയത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് ഉദ്ഘോഷിക്കുന്നു. യേശുക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ ഉത്ഥാനത്തോടെ ദൈവദൂഷണം ആരോപിച്ച് കൊലചെയ്യപ്പെട്ട മനുഷ്യരുടെ നിരാശരായ ശിഷ്യന്മാർ ലോകത്തെ രൂപാന്തരപ്പെടുത്തുന്ന വലിയ ശക്തിയായിത്തീർന്നു. യേശുക്രിസ്തു ഉയിർത്തെഴുന്നേറ്റുവന്നു അവർ കണ്ടെത്തി. ഉയിർത്തെഴുന്നേല്പ് ടു:ഖവെള്ളിയാഴ്ചയെ തിരുത്തിക്കൊടുക്കുകയും, എന്നാൽ ഉത്ഥാനം ചെയ്ത കർത്താവ് ക്രൂശിലേക്ക് വിരൽചൂണ്ടിക്കൊണ്ടു നമ്മോട് പറയുകയാണ്. 'That is the way of love and love is the only thing which is truly invincible and eternal'.

ലോകത്തിൽ വിജയം നൽകുന്നത് ചുരുട്ടിയ മുഷിയാണെന്നറേകർ ചിന്തിക്കുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ചുരുട്ടിയ മുഷിയുടെ ശക്തി താൽക്കാലികമാണ്. ചുരുട്ടിയ മുഷിയ്ക്ക് പകരം യേശുക്രിസ്തു വിരീച്ച, തുറന്ന കൈകളുടെ മർദ്ദം കാഴ്ചവയ്ക്കുന്നു. ആണികൾ തറസ്സുവാൻ യേശു കൈകൾ തുറന്നുകൊടുക്കുന്നു. ഇതു ക്രിസ്തീയ മാർഗ്ഗത്തെ ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടുന്നു. തുറന്ന കൈകൾ അടിച്ചമർത്തലിന്റെയും അധികാരത്തിന്റെയും മർദ്ദമല്ല, അതു തന്നെ ലോകത്തെ ആകർഷിക്കുന്നു; ഐക്യത്തിലേക്ക് നയിക്കുന്നു. ഇതു വാളിന്റെ മർദ്ദമല്ല ജീവിതാവസരം

Jai Johnson, Secretary.

റവ. ഏബ്രഹാം ഫിലിപ്പ്. മാങ്ങാനം

നംവരെ സ്നേഹത്തിന്റെ മാർഗ്ഗമാണ്. ഇതു കണ്ടിട്ടാണ് ശതാധിപൻ പറയുന്നത്; ഇവൻ ദൈവപുത്രൻ യിരുന്ന സത്യം.

നാം ജീവിക്കുന്ന ലോകത്തെ, ക്രൂശിന്റെ വെളിച്ചത്തിൽ നാമെങ്ങനെ ദർശിക്കും? നാമിന്നു അക്രമത്തെ അക്രമംകൊണ്ടു നേരിടുന്നു. അടുത്ത കാലത്തെ അയ്യം മധ്യം ബോംബെയും കൽക്കട്ടയും ഇതു നമ്മെ ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. ആരെങ്കിലും നമ്മെ യടിച്ചാൽ നമ്മുടെ സാമന്യ ബുദ്ധിയനുസരിച്ച് നാം അവരെ തിരിച്ചടിക്കും. എന്നാൽ ഈ സാമന്യബുദ്ധി ലോകത്തെ തകർച്ചയുടെ വക്കിലെത്തിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. ക്രൂശിന്റെ വെളിച്ചത്തിൽ ഒരു പുതിയ പാത പിൻപറ്റാൻ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനി വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. കർത്താവിനെപ്പോലെ ചളരെയധികം വിലകൊടുക്കുവേണമെന്നും മുറിയും സഹിപ്പാൻ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനി വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. പിതാവേ, ഇവർ ചെയ്യുന്നത് ഇന്നത്തെ അറിയാതെ കയ്യാളിയിട്ടുള്ള കർമ്മമാണ്. ക്രൂശിന്റെ അടയാളം വഹിക്കുന്ന ഒരു ക്രിസ്ത്യാനിക്കും ഏതു നിരാശയുടെയും രംഗം നേരിടാൻ കരളുണ്ട്. അങ്ങനെയുള്ള രംഗങ്ങളിൽ ആശ്വാസ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ ഏർപ്പെടുവാനുള്ള ശക്തി ലഭിക്കാതെ മരിച്ചു, യേശുക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ ദീർഘകാല പദ്ധതി അനുസരിക്കാൻ കഴിയാതെ

ഇന്നത്തെ ഉപദേശ സംസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ ക്രൂശിനും ഏതു ദൂതാണു നൽകാനുള്ളതു? ക്രൂശ് ഇന്നത്തെ ലോകത്തിന്റെ മൂല്യബോധത്തിൽനിന്നും വ്യത്യസ്തമായ ഒരു മാർഗ്ഗത്തിലേക്ക് വിരൽ ചൂണ്ടുന്നു. സ്വയം ആർജ്ജിക്കുക എന്നതിന് പകരം തുറന്ന കൈകൾക്കും മറ്റുള്ളവയ്ക്കും വേണ്ടി നൽകുന്നതിനും സമർപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനും മാറ്റമില്ലാത്ത സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നതിനും ക്രൂശ് നമ്മെ വെല്ലുവിളിക്കുന്നു. ക്രൂശ് നമ്മുടെ വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ കേന്ദ്ര സത്യമാണ്. സ്വജീവിതത്തെ മാറ്റമില്ലാതെ നൽകി നഷ്ടപ്പെടുത്തുകയും, യേശുക്രിസ്തുവിനും പിതാവിനുമായി സ്വജീവിതം നൽകുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നവർ അനുഗ്രഹം സമൃദ്ധമായ സന്തോഷത്തിന്റെയും സമാധാനത്തിന്റെയും ഉടമകളായിത്തീരുന്നു.

GOODBYE, GOOD LUCK

After serving our diocese for over three years, some of our beloved achenes are returning to India to take up new responsibilities within the next few weeks. They were with us for the last three years to share our joys and sorrows and give us spiritual leadership. All of them served our parishes to the utmost of their ability and as parishioners we benefited immensely from them. As members of one family, we had differences of opinions once in a while, but their

loyalty to the Mar Thoma Church, their dedication and service to the Church members and their love and concern to our well being are all worth emulating. The Messenger and its readers wish them all good luck and pray to the Almighty to give each one of our achenes the ability and the strength needed to shoulder added responsibilities in whatever capacity they are asked to serve in future. May God be with you achenes!

Rev. K.U. Abraham, Boston

Left United States, after seven years, in February 1993 to take up the charge of the Bangalore parish.

Rev. P.J. Alex, Dallas, Diocesan Secretary

Transferred to Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Rev. Joseph Ayrookuzhy, Philadelphia

Transferred to Trichur

Rev. Varghese Thomas, Staten Island, NY

Transferred to Ranni

Rev. Johnson P. Mathew, Teaneck, NJ

Secretary to Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus and the Kottayam Diocese.

Rev. A.T. Zachariah, London, U.K.

Higher studies

Rev. Joseph Jacob, Edmonton, Canada

Selection as Bishop.

MAR THOMA CHURCH OF PHILADELPHIA

New executive committee for the year 1993 has taken charge on January 1st. Annual general body meeting was held on Feb. 7th, passed audited account and report for the year 1992 and budget for the year 1993.

The following were elected as office leaders:

- Mr. K.C. Jacob (Vice President)
- Mr. C.T. Varghese (Treasurer)
- Mr. Varghese Joseph (Accountant)
- Mr. Thomas Joy (Secretary)
- Mr. Cherian Philip (Joint Secretary)

Edavaka Mission: Collected \$12,000 from church members towards the marriage aid fund and housing project fund which are being utilized to build 8 houses and marriage for 4 girls. Edavaka members generously contributed to this fund. Half of the project is already completed

Savika Sanghom: Sent \$550 to *Balikamandiram* at Perumbavoor and \$1,000 to Kerala for the wedding of a poor girl.

Sunday School: Added another \$1,000 to be endowment fund to help the deaf and dumb school at Kaserkode.

Youth League: North-Eastern Regional Conferences of both English and Malayalam Youth League were held in our church on Feb. 27th and March 20th respectively. These conferences were well attended by youths from Eastern Region parishes.

Our Youth League (Malayalam) won overall championship in the eastern region competitions held in New York.

James Cherian, (Assembly Member) Philadelphia

NEW ACHENS TO OUR DIOCESE

The Mar Thoma Messenger and its readers extend a warm welcome to our new achen's who will be arriving within the course of next few weeks to take up parish responsibilities in our diocese. While we cannot confirm the places of their posting, as they are still being finalized, we are pleased to give below some individual details of our achen's for the information of our readers:



From L to R : Reverends Lal Cherian, K.E. Easaw, Thomas George and M.P. Yohannan

1. Rev. Lal Cherian - Presently working as the Director of 'Asha Bhawan' (Institution for the handicapped), Pidavoor, Pathanapuram. Earlier he served as parish priest in Chalisery (Kunnamkulam) and Jodhpur (Rajasthan). Cherian achen's native place is Haripad. Achen is married (Kochamma's name is Aney Lal) and has a daughter (Linsey) aged 8 years.

2. Rev. K.E. Easaw - After graduating from the Mar Thoma Theological Seminary, Kottayam in 1987, the Rev. Easaw served our parishes in Ambarnabh, Kalyan and Nilambur. He is presently serving as the vicar of MTC, Pallikatu, Chungatura. Achen's native place is Kozhencherry. Achen is married to Mercy and they have a daughter, 3 years old, named Gifty Thankam Easaw.

3. Rev. Mathew John - Achen is currently serving as vicar of our church in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. He graduated from the Theological Seminary in 1986 and was then posted as Vicar of the Mar Thoma Church - Kumily, Vandiperiyar and Vandenmedu. Rev. John hails from Keekochoor, is married (Kochamma's name Meena Mathew) and they have a son Georgy, aged 1 1/2 years.

4. Rev. Ninan Jacob - After graduating from the Bishop's College, Calcutta in 1974, achen served as vicar in our parishes at Calicut, Pooyappally, Trivandrum, Anaprampal and Kottarakara from where he is now being transferred to our diocese. Jacob achen's native place is Punalur. Achen is married (Kochamma's name - Elizabeth Ninan) and they have two sons Joe (12 years) and Rejo (6 years)



From Left to Right: Reverends Ninan Jacob, P.G. Mathew and Mathew John

5. Rev. Thomas George- Currently working as Administrator , Girideepthi Tribal Hostel, (Hostel for tribal students) Thrikkakara, Kochi. After graduating from the M.T. Theological Seminary in 1981, Thomas George achen served in Goa, Belguam and Bombay. Achen's native place is Maramon. He is married (Kochamma Rachel Thomas) and they have two sons -Siju 7 years and Aju 3 years.

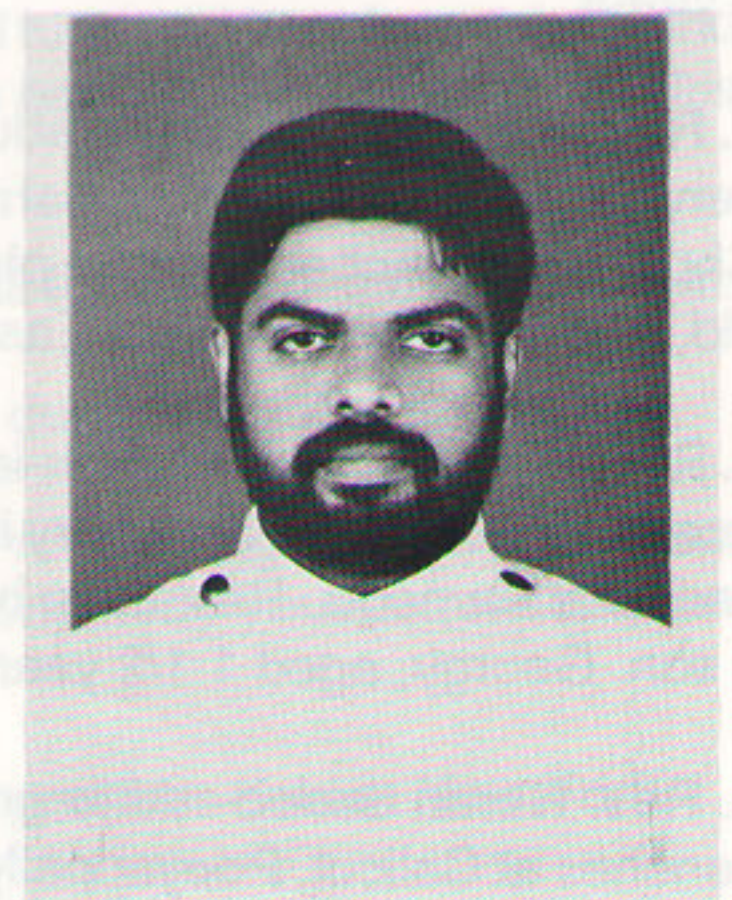
6. Rev. P.G. Mathew- After graduating from the United Theological Seminary in Bangalore in 1980, the Rev. Mathew served our parishes in Bokaro Steel Plant, Rajkot (Gujarat) and Konni. Achen is currently the vicar of St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Kolathupuzha. He is from Kumbazha (Pathanamthitta). The Rev. Mathew is married (Kochamma - Rosamma Mathew) and they have a boy of nine years named Romi and a girl of 3 1/2 years by the name Roni.

7. Rev. M.P. Yohannan- Currently the vicar of Jerusalem Mar Thoma Church, Kottayam. Achen graduated from Theological Seminary Jabalpur in 1967 and later served in our parishes at Quilon, Ernakulam, Pennukara, Bhilai, Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Chunkathara (Malabar) and Thuruthikadu. Yohannan achen is from Kotta, Chengannur and married to Saramma (Alice). Achen's two daughters Susan (20) and Rachel (18) are studying in San Francisco and the youngest daughter Anie (10) is a student in Kottayam.

Rev. Alexander M. Isaac is in the United States from September 1992 and is a student at the Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Hersey. He is studying for Th.M. (Christian Ethics) and is also the vicar of the Boston Mar Thoma Church and Asst. Vicar of Bethel Mar Thoma Church, Philadelphia.

The Rev. Issaac is the son of late Rev. M.I. Alexander, Vadakumthala, Karunagappally. He took his M.Sc. degree from the Kerala University and B.D. from Kottayam Theological Seminary. Kochamma (Mary Mathew) is teaching at the T.K.M. College of Engineering, Kollam, Kerala.

Rev. Abey T. Mammen- Will shortly be taking up parish responsibilities of the London, U.K. parish. Achen is from Edanadu, Chengannur. After serving in North India, he served in Manipal as a student chaplain. (Photo not available)



Rev. Alexander M. Isaac.

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Babu, Kusumam, Joby
Jeena & Julie



Titus Family
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DR. JOHN ABRAHAM, STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK RECIPIENT OF 'MOTHER INDIA-INTERNATIONAL AWARD'

Dr. John Abraham, a Marthomite from Staten Island, New York had the unique privilege of being the only Malayalee recipient of "Mother India - International Award" for Non-Resident Indians, given away at the 10th International Conference of NRIs from all over the world, held in New Delhi from December 28-30, 1992. This award is for "extra ordinary brilliance in the chosen field (medicine) and dedication and services rendered to promote India-NRI cooperation, thus setting an example for others to emulate". Earlier in June 1992, Dr. John Abraham was also the recipient of "Arch of India Gold Award" given in Detroit, Michigan by the then Indian Ambassador to the United States, Dr. Abid Hussein for meritorious services to India.

Dr. Abraham, a native of Trivandrum City, is a naturalized citizen of the United States. He is currently practicing Dermatology and Cosmetic Surgery, in Staten

Island, New York. He is also the founder of *Mission Village India*, a voluntary, people-to-people service organization whose main aim is to help the poor and needy villagers of India. During the years 1990, 1991 and 1992, he has conducted extensive medical camps in the remote villages of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Several cases of malnutrition, leprosy, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases were diagnosed and treated. In 1992, Dr. Abraham donated a free medical clinic in the village of Basarakodu, (Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh) which is serving about 11 villages which had no previous medical care. This clinic is run by full time physician and staff and also by short term voluntary physicians from the US.

Dr. Abraham lives in Staten Island, New York with wife Anna, Daughter Susan (19), John (17) and Mathew (14).



Dr. John Abraham being greeted by the President of India, Dr. Sankar Dayal Sharma after being awarded the 'Mother India International Award 1992.' on December 30, 1992.

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

Parables from Mathew, Luke (as in New International Version)

F I R S R B A R R E N F I G T R E E Y I A B D Q F S T
 G P N F F O T L S Q F R B V O K W J V N H F M R E O P
 A S T R O N O M E X L I M Q P O R S F G I J T E F W S
 E W M L G H A C B D F E I K L M D N R O T E S P U Q V
 E N D A C F G B U V L N R S Q T P S L Z U Y O W M X N
 H B O I A Z J Y X K W D L V M U N O A Q T O R P F S Q
 E C D S F T E N M I N A S G J H S I N M K O L W I M S
 B M A O T Z W Y O X C T D W V T U A S E A R F P N Q N
 V I G W H S R I Q J W M X K C Y B L P Z R M O E N I
 L C M E N L O O F H C I R O S T U B V Z W Y I X P T G
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 J E S U S O F I S A B I R V U G O D L L O V E K R N V
 F G O V M L U M E S T G Q A V D P E N F M G L H L I W
 D C B O E N F M G L K H R P S Z M P U V W O D U S T E
 P H A R S I E E A N D T H E T A X C O L L E C T O R T

1. For three years the owner of the vineyard came to look for fruit in this tree and did not find any. (Luke 13:6)
This parable was about _____.
2. He goes to a friend at an odd time and persists to lend him three loaves of bread. (Luke 11:5)
Who was this? _____.
3. The one who had mercy on a man who fell to robbers. (Luke 10:30)
This is the parable of _____.
4. The crippled, the blind and the lame who were in the streets and the alleys of the town were brought into this feast in the Kingdom of God. What was this feast? (Luke 14:15)
5. Two went up to pray but one went home justified before God. Who were the two? (Luke 18:10)
6. The woman lost just this one but searched carefully and found it. Fore sure, she rejoiced with her friends and neighbors over it. (Luke 15:8)
7. The one who had, more was given to him. What was the parable about? (Luke 19:12)
8. The younder son set off and wasted his money in wild living. When he came to his senses, he came back to his father for forgiveness. Whom was this parable about? (Luke 15:11)
9. If your life is demanded from you this very night, who will get all that you have saved for yourself? Whom was this parable about? (Luke 12:20)
10. Five were foolish and five were wise. Who were they? (Mathew 25:1)
11. The man found this treasure, He valued it so he sold everything he had and bought it. What was it? (Mathew 13:44)
12. His seeds fell at different places. Only those which fell on good soil, produced a good crop. Name this parable? (Mathew 13:1)

Mrs. Saji Pothen, Los Angeles

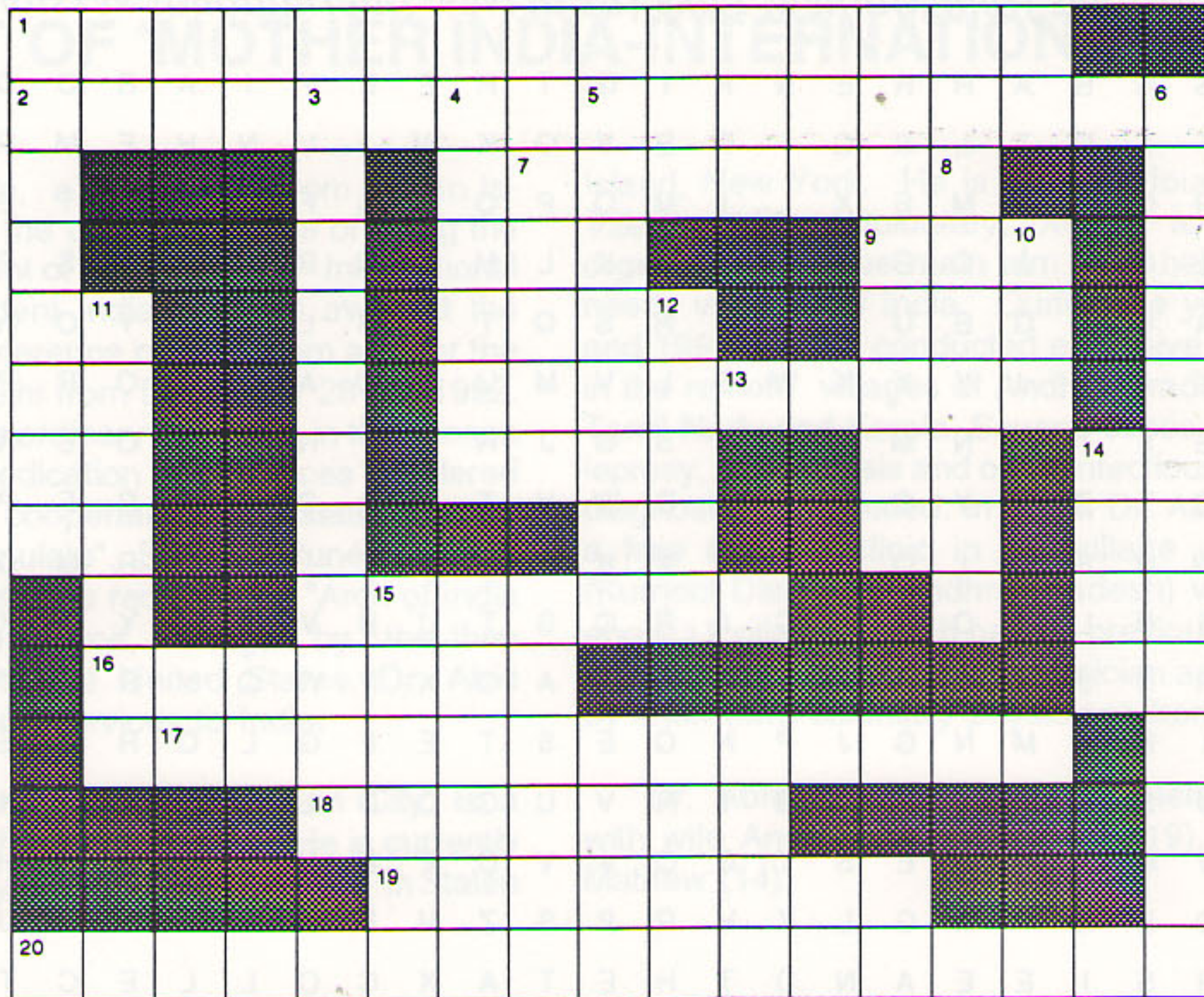
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BIBLE WORD SEARCH

Parables from the Bible (as in New International Version)



ACROSS

1. She kept coming to the judge to grant her justice against her adversaries. The judge, though did not fear God or care about men, because of her nature granted her justice. This is the parable of the _____. (Luke 18: 1-8)
2. They were two different men, one enjoyed luxury and the other poor. The former suffered agony after death while the latter was comforted by the angels. Who were they? (Luke 16:19-31)
7. This unmerciful person was pardoned by his master but he demanded debt from his fellow worker. But the master came to know of it and changes his pardon to punishment. Who was this? (Mathew 18: 23-25)
13. The Kingdom of Heaven is like this, which a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour. It worked all through the dough. What was it? (Mathew 13: 33)
15. He was the youngest son of Jerub-Baal, he escaped by hiding from his brother Abimelech. He told the parable of the trees going to anoint a thorn bush to be their king. (Judges 9: 3-22)
16. The man gave this to his servants. The one who had only one did not make any more because he was wicked and lazy. (Mathew 25 14-30)
17. The one who sowed good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world. _____ stands for the sons of the kingdom and _____ are the sons of the evil one. (Mathew 13: 37-43)
18. One owed the moneylender five hundred denarii and other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay back, so their debts were cancelled. They were two _____. (Luke 7: 41-42)
19. The Kingdom of Heaven is like this. The men worked at different hours here but everyone received one denarius. Where did they work? (Mathew 20: 1-16)
20. No one pours this into this. If one does, both will be ruined. What are they? (Mark 2:22)

DOWN

1. The word of the Lord came to them and they used parables to display divine directions, to that it is easy for people to understand. Who were they? (Isaiah 5:1, Jeremiah 13:1, Ezekiel 17:3)
3. This parable is about the smallest seed you plant in the ground. But when it grows, it becomes the largest of all garden plants and gives shelter to birds. (Mark 4:30)
4. He is a prophet. He told King David a parable of two men. (II Samuel 12:1)
5. No one sews a patch of this on an old garment. (Mathew 9:16)
6. When the Son of Man comes in his glory, He will separate the people one from another like this. (Mathew 25: 31-33)
7. A man owns a hundred of this, and one of them wanders away. He goes and looks for it. This parable is about the lost _____. (Mathew 18: 10-14)
8. One told his father he would not go to the vineyard but he went, the other said he would go but did not. Who were they? (Mathew 21: 28-31)
9. His son was Amaziah, the King of Judah, who did not listen to the parable of a thistle and a cedar. Who was this? (II Chronicles 25: 18-23)
10. The Kingdom of Heaven is like this - When let down into the lake, catches all kinds of fish, but the fisherman collects only the good ones and throws the bad away. What is it? (Mathew 13: 47-50)
11. The owner of the vineyard sent his only son to collect some of the fruit of the vineyard. But they took him, killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. Who were they? (Mark 12: 1-11)
12. A wise woman from this place, spoke to King David to forgive Absalom. (II Samuel 14: 5-21)
14. It is a thing. Building your house on this is like a man who hears the word of God and puts them into practice (Mathew 7:24)

DAIVATHINTE VAZHICAL, Ente Jeevithayathrayiloode (Malayalam)

Mr. M.M. John

22810 30th Ave. South, #A203 • Des Moines, Washington 98198

78 Pages, Price #3,00

History is the record of man's response to God's will and plan. Man's rebellion against God's plan and the consequence of it in national and personal life is the major part of it. But we see a golden thread also of lives committed to carry out God's will. This book is part that history.

Mr. John has divided the book into eight chapters, in the form of essays and discusses essential ingredients of a successful Christian pilgrimage of every person. But theoretical affirmations become alive by illustrations and applications from his personal life. His experiences are unique and miraculous. But that is God's response to his obedience. What Mr. John conveys to the reader is that God is faithful to those who are

ദൈവത്തിന്റെ വഴികൾ

എന്റെ ജീവിതയാത്രയിലൂടെ



committed to Him.

The book is written in simple Malayalam, enjoyable by all. The print is rather too small. The final chapter on changing denominational affiliation is somewhat an anti-climax. Denomination is not important in the pilgrimage of a Christian. God is not concerned about it, and the reader normally is not interested in that either.

The chapter on the foundation of family life is especially helpful in the American context. Happiness in a marriage is based on commitment to each other and to God, as illustrated by the author.

"Daivathinte Vazhikal" will challenge the reader to test God's faithfulness in personal life.

Dr. Abraham C. Thomas, Los Angeles

MATRIMONIAL

Inviting Matrimonial correspondence for a beautiful Marthomite girl 23 years completing her B.Pharm in India (March 1993) from a professionally qualified God fearing boy settled in USA . Please respond with full details to Box No. AP/493, C/o The Editor, Mar Thoma Messenger.

Marthomite parents invite proposals for their son, M.D. (USA), second year resident, 26 years old. Prefer girls with education in medicine, engineering or similar professionals. Please forward correspondence in confidence to Box No. BV/ A93 C/o The Editor, Mar Thoma Messenger.

Marthomite parents are looking for a suitable professional girl, Doctor or Engineer, for their son, Doctor, (height 5 ft. 5 in., Wheat color, 35 years old, never married) FRCS from England, now doing research in Oncology in U.S.A. Please write to Box CA/4/93 C/o The Editor, Mar Thoma Messenger.

Proposals invited for a Marthomite girl, 24 years , medical student in the U.S. , born again Christian , with high standard of moral values and respect for Indian culture and traditions , from parents of Marthomite doctors within the age group of 26 to 29 years working or studying either in the West or India. Write with returnable photograph to Box No. MRA/493 C/o The Editor, Mar Thoma Messenger.

Uncle living in USA invites marriage proposals for one Engineering and the other Business degree holder, both boys aged 28 years working presently in India from parents of US or Canadian immigrant girls. Write to Box JCK/A93 C/o The Editor, Mar Thoma Messenger.

Proposals invited for a Marthomite boy 25 years, dentist in India, from a professionally qualified girl settled in USA. Please respond with full details to Box No. AP/493 C/o The Editor Mar Thoma Messenger.

PUTHIYA AKASAM PUTHIYA BHOOMI

(New Heaven and New Earth)

The Rev. Joseph Ayrookuzhy, Philadelphia

(Privately printed and published)

Ayrookuzhyil Achan had done us a great service in identifying the edifying features of the book of Revelation. Although the title lists this book as an interpretation or commentary, it is not. It is a Bible study and a good one at that. The author is not using the exegetical or hermeneutical principles of the Antiochene tradition which would have dealt with the historical and contextual facts of this book. He is spiritualizing, pulling the spiritual principles out of the texts to meet modern needs and to give a current message. In doing so the author does not have to be accountable to currently applicable hermeneutical methods. He makes the book current to those who listen to him or read him. The interest of the reader is piqued and the book is read. Mission accomplished.

This reviewer is a traditionalist who believes that it is the same God who through the Holy Spirit inspired the authors of the 65 other books as well as the author of the visions in Revelations and the writing thereof and the inclusion of this book in the canonical 66 books. Unless one believes in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit throughout the process of canonization one would have to ascribe truth and wisdom to all the Apocryphal books.

All of what is said above lead to a suggestion. The Book of Revelations should be studied with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and it is best studied in groups of believers. Groups can verify and validify perceptions and interpretations. Dictatorial interpretations may lead to tragedies such as the Johnstown mass suicide or the Waco stand-off. Ayrookuzhy Achan has recommended several interpretations and extrapolations of what is in the Book of Revelations. But they need not be final. This reviewer likes the feature of his study which provides the salient lessons without going into doctrinal or eschatological finalities.

The best of this book, for this reviewer, are the last two chapters. Chapter 5 deals with the current applicability of the Book of Revelations. In the four points here the author exhibits the guts of the book of Revelation. (1) The vision of an active God forming and reforming the Church. (2) the horrendous nature of sin (alienation) and its final defeat, (3) the protection and preservation of the saints, and (4) an inclusive and ecumenical vision of the Church.

In the last chapter the author lists and gives scriptural references to the **state of blissfulness** as described in the Book of Revelations. They are: (1) Listening to and reading the Word of God, (2) the absence of fear of death, (3) the need to be willing and ready to move on, just as the Pilgrim in Progress, (4) the expectation of the wedding dinner (figurative) when Christ receives the Church that was in preparation, (5) the hope of the first resurrection for those who lived and believed in Jesus Christ, (6) the state of internalizing and living the Word of God, and (7) the believers receiving special privileges in the New Jerusalem because of their perseverance in Faith.

Visions are invigorating and enabling. Dreams, Sigmund Freud told us in his classic **Interpretations of Dreams**, are fulfillment of wishes. Visions helped the Church get through the greatest of repressions and persecutions. Visions allow the visionary to see

the reality of God above time, space and all temporalities. Visions are prospective while dreams are retrospective. Through visions God breaks into time and space to expose new realities while dreams are mere wishes of what could have been and are not. Visions create hope while dreams create distress and confusion. Visions is that of God and the Spirit while dream is that of the body and mind.

For this reviewer, one of the most enriching and enthralling moment during the St. James Liturgy as celebrated by the Mar Thoma Church comes after the Amanuensis and Epiclesis when the whole congregation is engaged in what is called the Great Intercession and during which the Deacon reads, "Lord in the last day" Before this prayer the Deacon reads of all the great Councils that our church recognizes and of all the parts of the church, and the world. But during the prayer remembering the faithful dead, this writer then as a child in Kerala and now as an adult in this USA gets a great moment of thrill knowing that he is part of a church Triumphant as envisioned by John in Revelations so that he too can say, **Come Lord Jesus, Come.**

This reviewer highly recommends this book for study by the faithful among the Mar Thoma Christians. If we do not study and internalize it, then the crazies will take over this book.

George J. Poikail, Dallas, Texas

CHRISTAVA KUDUMBINI (CHRISTIAN WIFE)

Mrs. Leelamma Johnson, New Jersey
(CLS, Tiruvalla, 1993)

This certainly is a timely book. This book comes with a rather endearing endorsement by the Diocesan Bishop and nothing should prevent the Mar Thoma families in North America from buying this book at four dollars a piece. The credentials of the author are stellar. A highly literate woman, a former secretary of the Youth League, a recognized speaker, the wife of a priest, and mother of three (soon to be four) children. She had studied her subject and researched it well.

The book has sound Biblical foundations and the thoughts remain within the traditional theological boundaries. There is no need to fear that after reading this book the Mar Thoma women will rise up and demand their birth-right, equality, within the church or decry many of the traditionally secondary and subservient roles that they have played. The book confirms what the Mar Thoma church believes about women - equality of women is in Christ and nowhere else. It contains plenty of stories about illustrious women in the Bible who have become vehicles of God's grace and design for His people. There are many stories of God's answer to women who were extreme loneliness and distress and these women such as Elkhana, Elizabeth, and Mary deserve great admiration and even imitation.

The book affirms the traditional Kerala family, preferably the extended family (p.18) and the traditional role of women as the "weaker vessel" (p.20, para 3). There are plenty of exegeses all to show the glory of the family unit and women's crucial role in maintaining that unit. The author makes no attempt to differentiate among the contextual vagaries of historical or Biblical events spanning centuries, or the different cultural influences or distinctions. Thus she moves freely from Old Testament women to New Testament women to modern women

and then back and forth, to prove her points. What the author is seeking are themes so that she can tie her conclusions and give instructions to the Mar Thoma Church members in North America.

There are some excellent insights. Partnership in the family (pp. 30ff) offers instructions to avoid spousal conflict (p. 31, para 1). The highlight of the book is chapter 5, a paean for, a celebration of, and a poem on motherhood. Pages 38-39 stand out as an adoration of mothers, Christian or otherwise, and all of us who are blessed to have been born in Christian homes say a loud Amen



The book suffers from an absence of structural integrity. As one begins to read, it soon becomes evident that the book is a series of sermons on women and family rather than a book about wives in general or Christian wives in particular. The title simply provides a chain to link the various sermons and essays. A book on Christian wife should have a certain focus and direction which this book lacks. Consequently, many names are given as experts, Paul Rader, St. Ambrose, Augustine, Lydia, Eliazar and the Wesleys, but no sources are identified so that

readers can verify them for further study and research.

Therefore, errors seem to creep in. On page 26 John Wesley and George Wesley are named as the founder of a church and a Christian musician respectively but the world knows them as John Wesley and Charles Wesley. On page 40 it is stated that a child completes the intellectual formation by age three. But studies show otherwise. Children continue their intellectual maturation well into their teens and it is intertwined with their social development and maturation.

In the Patristic period there were two schools of

theology. The first one was the Antiochene school which exegeted Biblical texts and Christian faith using their historical and cultural contexts. They remained faithful, in as much as possible, to the intention of the original story, scripture, or instructions. The second was the Alexandrian school which tended to find spiritual lessons in everything that was written or said, no matter when and how, using the texts and stories for their symbolic value. This is called spiritualization. A story or event is milked just for the spiritual truth that can be imposed upon it without any need to adhere to any hermeneutical principles. For example, Mary the mother of Jesus is mentioned as the ideal woman on pages 31 and 51. She was God's instrument as a one-time event.

If the above are some short deficiencies they do not affect the message of the book. In the last chapter the author's observations remind reviewer of the old generalizations about India based on brief stays by Western missionaries or researchers and by sensational pictures of Calcutta. Three decades ago when this reviewer came to America those generalizations and stereotypes were rampant. The author is certainly free to make her observations but they are not to be taken as prescriptive conclusions. 33% of divorce and 22% of

single mothers have no known factual basis. Or none is given. These numbers are usually bandied around as conclusions. In fact the divorce rate in America is decreasing, partly because couples cohabit before marriage, something which none of us endorses. But facts are facts and should not be given to support biases. This last chapter contains exaggerations and generalizations galore but they should not divert attention from the whole book and its message, and that is, Jesus Christ has done something to enhance women, men, children and families. In Christ there is no 'queen' (p. 42) king or "kingdom" (p.43) Jesus Christ encourages relationship based on equality although with different roles. Roles do not change status. He encourages walking with, talking with, sharing with and how much different and richer is all that from fiefdom, kingdom, kingship and queenhood? May be some day we will learn from Jesus the Christ and change our views of God, of each other and certainly of the family.

From a busy schedule of being a mother and "kochamma" the author had taken time and effort to put her thoughts together and this reviewer applauds her for that. It is his earnest hope that everyone who reads this review will buy a copy of the book and study it.

George J. Poikail, Dallas

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