



Lighthouse

A Monthly Newsletter of the Horeb Mar Thoma Church

February 2013

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

Let us thank Lord for all His Blessing and guidance. This month I would like to share a few thoughts from Psalms 17. Three words summarize David's cry in Psalms 17. The first word is **hear**. Hear me Lord, my plea is just listen to my cry (v.1). David was saying I want the Lord to hear me, because my heart is right. You have tested my heart (V.3). When did God do that, you have visited me in the night. The dark times of life are when God proves us. He also proves Himself to us if we let Him, when you are going through the darkness, when the night has come, when you can't see any light, remember, He is proving you and Proving Himself to you. God knew that David's heart was right, "Hear a just cause O Lord" (V.1). Remember, when you are in darkness, When you are in danger, when you are facing difficulties God will hear you.

The second key word is **hold**. Uphold my steps in your paths that my footsteps may not slip.(V.5). David wasn't simply standing still, doing nothing. He was on the move, when we are in the darkness we move one step at a time as the Lord directs us. We don't just sit still and wonder. What is going to happen next? David was saying, "God I am going to get moving, you have got to hold me up. Direct me I don't want to slip and fall. Jude must have been known this verse, He wrote now to Him "who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you faultless before the presence of His Glory with exceeding joy"(Jude:24)

The third word is **Hide**. Keep me as an apple of your eye; hide me under the shadow of your wings (V.8). A shadow is not good protection, but if it is the shadow of the god's wing, we can depend on it. The wings of the cherubim in the Holy of Holies. David was saying I am coming to the very throne of God. , please hide me and hold me and hear me, God replied David I will do it, I am going to carry you through your dark times

Everyone must face dark times God allows times to testify because He uses them to accomplish His purposes. God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purposes (Rom.8; 28). Are you facing difficulty today Remember, our God is faithful. He will hear you and direct you through the darkness let Him prove you and give Him an opportunity to prove Himself to you

May Lord almighty bless you.

Saji Achen.

Message of the
Rev. Thomas
Month JOHN



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Worship Schedule

Lessons

Readers

Deacons

February 3 Healing of Body, Mind and Soul through Christ

2:30p Bible Study & Prayer

3:00p Divine Service ~English

2 Kings 20:1-11

Acts. 3: 1- 10

George Abraham

Catharin Abraham

Manoj Mathew

Giju George

February 10 Pethurtha—Beginning of Great Lent

2:30p Bible Study & Prayer

3:00p Holy Communion ~Malayalam

Isaiah 1:10-20

Romans 12:1-8

Ammini Samuel

Thomas Thambi

Thomas Mathew

February 17 Lent: Feeling the Touch of Christ

2:30p Bible Study & Prayer

3:00p Divine Service ~English

2 Kings 5:1-14

1 John 2:15-17

Titus Peedikayil

Blessy Peedikayil

Stefin Mathew

Ashby Mathews

February 24 Healing through Forgiveness of Sins

2:30p Bible Study & Prayer

3:00p Holy Communion ~English

Numbers 12:1-16

Acts 16:11-18

C.S. Siddhartha

Krupa Siddhartha

Manoj Mathew

Joshi John

Building Faith In Our Community

Behold, I make all things new!

Well, now, dear friends, why do you and I ever get stale and flat? Why, it is because we get away from him who says, 'Behold, I make all things new.' The straight way to a perpetual newness and freshness of holy youth is to go to Christ again, just as we did at the first. A better thing still is never to leave him, but to stand for ever at the cross-foot delighting yourself in his all-sufficient sacrifice.

- Charles Spurgeon





“Bible study isn’t necessarily about powering through ten chapters a day, but rather reading with comprehension--with meditation.” Greg Laurie

Bible Study

Hope for the AFFLICTED

The Old Testament is full of stories about God using great leaders, like David and Moses. But God is not concerned only with people of power or status. Ruth and Naomi were women who had neither power nor position: Both were widows, and one was a foreigner. Although their circumstances were dire and they had little hope for the future, God used the events of their lives to pave the way for the Savior of humanity.

A Tough Decision

Pray that God would help you trust in his unfailing love.

Read Ruth 1:1-22.

Reflect Ruth 1:6-14

Why do you think Naomi encourages Orpah and Ruth to return home? Is she acting out of kindness, or is she hoping to free herself from the burden of them? Why do you think her daughters-in-law wanted to remain with her? Ruth is later commended for her decision to remain with Naomi (2:11-12), but Orpah is never condemned for returning home. Was her decision wrong? What do Orpah and Ruth’s decisions show us about their character?

It seems that Naomi has given up on God’s love for her (1:2), but she hopes that He will show kindness to Orpah and Ruth. The word she uses for “kindness” refers to God’s unfailing, covenantal love. God ends up showing His love to Naomi by providing an heir for her through Ruth (2:20; 4:14-15). Where else in the Bible does God display His faithful love despite human doubt? What does this say about God’s unfailing love? In times of difficulty, how can you remember that God’s love is unfailing?

Reflect & pray through these questions throughout your week.

Loyalty

Pray that the Holy Spirit would make you as committed to God as Ruth was to Naomi.

Read Ruth 1:1-22

Reflect on Ruth 1:15-18

Ruth’s first speech is an eloquent display of loyalty. It would have been much easier for Ruth to return home and start fresh. What do you think motivated her to stay with Naomi? Read Ruth 1:17. What does this passage demonstrate about Ruth’s commitment to Naomi? Who or what are you committed to in your life? Are you as committed to God as Ruth is to Naomi?

By staying with Naomi, Ruth distances herself from Chemosh, the god of Moab (see 1 Kgs 11:7) and aligns herself with Yahweh. Naomi had just claimed that “the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me” (Ruth 1:13), making Ruth’s commitment to Yahweh all the more impressive. How does Ruth’s loyalty to Naomi exemplify God’s loyalty to His people? Read Lev. 26:11-13, Jer 32: 37-41, and Ezek 11:17-20. How do the statements in these passages demonstrate God’s promises of loyalty? How should God’s promises of loyalty affect our lives (see 2 Cor 6:14-7:!)?

Reflect & pray through these questions throughout your week.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

■ **Sevika Sangham Meeting**
Check church Announcement

■ **YFF Meeting**
Februray 23
Where: TBD

PRAYER MEETING

EDAVAKA MISSION
EVERY TUESDAY @ 7PM

CHECK ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christian Headlines:

Baptist Leaders Predict 'Mass Exodus' From Scouts Over Gay Leader Decision

The Southern Baptist Convention expressed extreme disappointment Monday to news that the Boy Scouts of America will likely approve admission of professed homosexuals as scout leaders, with officials close to the SBC predicting a mass exodus out of Scouting by Baptist churches.

A vote on the matter by BSA is planned during an executive meeting in Irving, Texas, the first week of February.

"This is a catastrophic decision for the Boy Scouts of America. In order to placate their East and West Coast appendages, they are tearing out the heart of their Midwest and Southern support. This decision will lead to a mass exodus of traditional, orthodox Christianity from the Boy Scouts, including thousands of Catholic, Baptist and other traditional faith congregations," Dr. Richard Land, speaking in his role as head of SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, told The Christian Post.

Albert Mohler, president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, told USA Today that the policy change would be "nothing less than disastrous for the Boy Scouts of America." In a blog post, Mohler asserted that the "new policy announced yesterday is almost sure to please no one and to lead to disaster for the Scouts. Those pressing for a reversal of the national policy are not likely to be satisfied with a local option."

Ohio Church Raises \$10,000 to Pay Neighbors' Water Bills

A church in Ohio recently raised approximately \$10,000 as part of an annual charity drive in order to help its neighbors pay their water bills.

Several families in **Pickerington** called their water company and learned to their surprise that their water would not be shut off this month because of the charitable efforts of **Grace Fellowship Church**. Beth Shively, spokeswoman for Grace Fellowship, told The Christian Post that the payments for water bills of those in the neighborhood were part of her church's annual "Giving It Back" campaign.

"Grace Fellowship wants to be a church that generously gives to the community," said Shively of Grace Fellowship to CP. "We want to be the kind of church that the community would notice if we ever left town. We do these things not to recruit new people to our church, but just to let the community know that we love them and God loves them."

DID YOU
KNOW



Why do we say, "hello" when we answer the phone?

The first word used to answer the phone was the nautical greeting "ahoy," because the first regular phone system was in the maritime state of Connecticut. Alexander Graham

Bell, the inventor, answered with the Gaelic "hoy" but it was Thomas Edison's greeting of "hello," an exclamation of surprise dating back to Middle Ages, that caught on, and so we answer today with "Hello?"



Happy moments, praise God.

Difficult moments, seek God.

Quiet moments, worship God.

Every moment, thank God.

Painful moments, trust God.

Life Lessons



In 1901, H.C. Booth was sitting in a rocking chair on his front porch, watching the sun set. Living in the Midwest, he was also watching the dust bowl.

As he contemplated the scene, he wondered, “What if we could reverse the wind? Then instead of blowing dust, we could pull dust.”

Later that year, he invented the vacuum cleaner.

Don't count the days, make the days count.
~ Ed Agresta

The thoughts that come often unsought, and, as it were, drop into the mind, are commonly the most valuable of any we have.
~ John Locke (English Philosopher)

LAUGHTER the best MEDICINE

He who laughs ...lasts!

How many Christians does it take to change a lightbulb?

Charismatics: Only one: hands already in the air.

Presbyterians: None: Lights will go on and off at predestined times.

Roman Catholics: None: candles only.

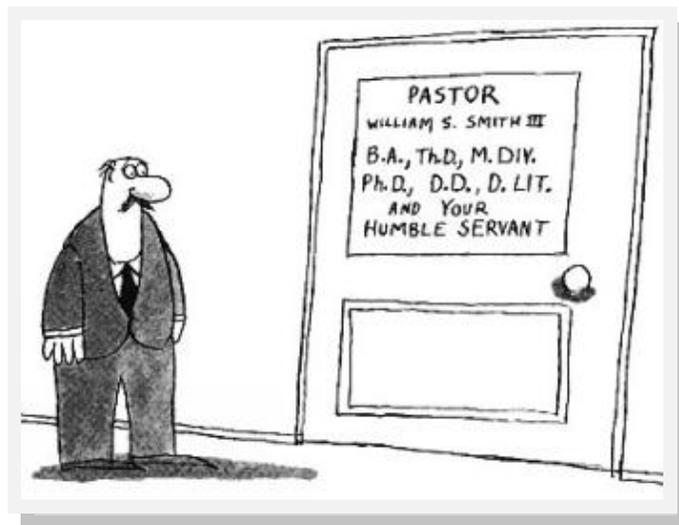
Baptists: At least fifteen: one to change the lightbulb and three committees to approve the change and decide who brings the potato salad.

Episcopalians: Eight: one to call the electrician and seven to say how much they liked the old one better.

Methodist: Undetermined. Whether your light is bright, dull, or completely out, you are loved. You can be lightbulb, turnip bulb, or tulip bulb. A church-wide lighting service is planned for Sunday. Bring bulb of your choice and a covered dish.

Lutherans: None: Lutherans don't believe in change.

Amish: What's a lightbulb?



Pictures from National Youth Leadership Conference





KEY BIBLE WORDS Made Easy

Angel

Meaning: The New Testament word for “angel” is angelos and means messenger, and t is used in that way in Luke 7:24. The word most often refers to a specially-created order of heavenly being.

General Bible teaching

- 1) The nature of angels.** Angels are spiritual beings. “In speaking of angels he (God) says, ‘He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire.’” Hebrews 1:7
Angels appear to have free will. Satan is a fallen, rebellious angel. See Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 12:9.
- 2) The work of angels**
Angels serve God and carry out his wishes. See Genesis 3:24; Isaiah 6:1-4.
Angels minister to human beings. The phrase “Guardian Angel” refers to the watchful care angels take over God’s people. See Matthew 18:10; Hebrews 1:13,14. See also:
Hagar: Genesis 16:7-14
Elijah: 1 Kings 19:1-8
Joseph: Matthew 2:13
Peter: Acts 12:7
Paul: Acts 27:23

Jesus and angles

Jesus was superior to angels (Hebrews 1) but was also cared for by them. See:

- Jesus’ temptation: Matthew 4:11
- Jesus’ agony in the garden: Luke 22:43
- Jesus’ resurrection: Matthew 28:1-8

(Quote to Ponder

“An angel is a spiritual being created by God without a body, for the service of Christendom and the church.”

- *Martin Luther.*

Pondering God’s Achievement

God, I ponder Your achievement.
You don’t condone my sin,
nor do You compromise Your
standard.

You don’t ignore my rebellion,
nor do You relax Your demands.
Rather than dismiss my sin,
You assume my sin,
and incredibly sentence Yourself.

Your holiness is honored.
My sin is punished...
and I am redeemed.

You have done what I cannot do -
so I can be what I dare not dream -
Perfect before You.

- Max Lucado

HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Dr. Abraham P. Athyal

Q & A

Q) What is Thablitha? Why do we have it on the Thronos?

Thablitha is Syriac means 'tablet', the diminutive of table, as a booklet is the diminutive of abook. In other words, Thablitha is a small table. It is used in the Communion service, not only by the Eastern churches, but also by the Roman Catholic Church. The Thablitha is generally made of wood. Without it we are not permitted to celebrate Qurbana. As in the case of the Thronos, the Thablitha is also consecrated by the bishops. The name of the bishop who consecrates it and the date of the consecration are inscribed on it.

When Communion is celebrated in the church, the Thablitha is set on the Thronos and the holy vessels on the Thablitha. If the celebration is done in a house or where there is no Thronos, the Thablitha is placed on a table, and the paten and chalice are kept on the Thablitha. Thus the Thablitha becomes especially useful for celebrating Qurbana in places outside the church.

Q) What is the Theology behind Thablitha?

We have no specific teaching about the theology behind the Thablitha. Those who considered Qurbana as a sacrifice must have started the use of Thablitha as a symbol of the altar. In fact, the term itself also means "altar". There are reference in the Old Testament to tables and portable altars of wood (Ex 27:7) used for sacrifice. But in our use of Thablitha we should attribute meaning to it in terms of our understanding of Qurbana as a spiritual sacrifice.

AAA: Angels Always on Alert

By Rosemarie McManus, Potomac Falls, Virginia

Wrapped presents, homemade knit stockings, fresh-baked goods—I ran through a mental checklist of all the things I needed to bring to my son's for Christmas Eve. Despite my recently acquired walking cane, I'd wheeled everything from my apartment to the car in a shopping cart.

Just because I lived in a retirement community didn't mean I needed help getting ready for Christmas. I slammed shut the trunk. *Ready to hit the road!*

Moving to the retirement community had been a big change, although not as big as when I left Germany for America after World War II. I no longer had space to host Christmas Eve dinner. Fortunately, my son and his family lived nearby and had offered to pick up the torch.

I drove along, smiling at the thought of the young grandchildren's happy faces when they saw all the goodies. On the radio, Bing Crosby sang "White Christmas." Outside, the icy wind howled and the sky was laden with snow clouds, but I felt warmed by the Christmas spirit.

I was a few miles from my son's when the engine made a funny sound. It coughed, sputtered, coughed again. *That doesn't sound good.* I quickly turned the wheel and pulled over to the grassy median on my left. Or tried to. I came to a stop with the rear of the car still sticking out into the fast lane.

The gas pedal didn't respond. Then I noticed the glowing orange icon on the dashboard display, and the gas tank needle. Empty.

How could I have neglected to keep an eye on my gas gauge? Me, who didn't need any help? Why hadn't I listened to my children's pleas to get a cell phone?

"Mein heilig Schutzengel," I prayed in German. *Angel of God, my guardian dear.* Cars honked. Drivers were impatient to get where they were going. I got out to flag someone down. Someone slowed to warn me to get out of traffic. Another, irate, yelled, "Call the cops!" Everyone else zoomed by at 60 miles per hour.

I stood there, leaning on my cane, shaking with cold and fear, almost in tears. The sky was getting dark. *They'll be wondering where I am.* Could I walk to a service station? I'd have to cross the four-lane highway at the very least. *What do I do?*

Just then, a gray compact car pulled up. A man behind the wheel, a woman in the passenger seat. The woman got out and hurried toward me. She was of medium height, roundly built, her oval face framed by dark, wavy hair. She seemed to shimmer, surrounded with an aura of light.

Before I could say a word about my predicament, she called to me. "Go back and sit in your car. We've come to help you."

"Oh, thank you! Thank you!" I shouted. I did as she told me.

She came to my window. "You'll be all right," she said. "We'll get enough gas for you to drive to a station."

I watched the gray car drive off. After a minute, it returned, and the woman stepped out carrying a red gas can. She opened my gas cap and poured.

"How can I thank you?" I called to her. "Let me pay you for the gas."

She shook her head.

"You're like my guardian angel this Christmas Eve," I said.

She laughed, finished pouring, and handed me the empty gas can. "Here, keep this in your trunk. Someday you can help someone else." Then she leaned in the window and gave me a feather-light hug. "Merry Christmas. We'll watch out for you as you pull back into traffic."

I guessed everyone needed help some time, old and young alike. I started the engine and pulled into the lane. "I'm okay!" I called out, and looked back to wave good-bye.

Only the gray car was gone. That's when I wondered. How did they know gas was what I needed? I'd never told them.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 Mathew, Stefin Saji
- 1 Mathews, Aleyamma
- 2 John, Joshi
- 2 Varghese, M.V
- 3 George, Zaavia
- 5 Mathew, Timothy Philip
- 10 Chacko, Gracy
- 11 Cholakath, Abiel Jiju
- 14 Mammen, Lejo
- 17 Abraham, Jayni
- 19 Chacko, Benny
- 22 Abraham, Noah Saji
- 25 Mathew, Pranathi Elizabeth
- 27 Mathew, Annamma



Executive Committee 2013

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Mr. Isaac George
Vice President

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Mr. Joshi John
Area Prayer Group

Dr. Thomas Mathew
Edavaka Mission

Mr. Titus Peedikayil
Young Family Fellowship

Mrs. Sherly Saji
Sevika Sangham

Mr. Raj Abraham
Technology Coordinator

- 4 Ammini & K. O. Samuel
- 20 Susan & Dr. Thomas Mathew



Horeb MAR THOMA CHURCH

12741 Main St., Garden Grove, CA 92840

Rev. Thomas John
626-963-0432

Mr. Isaac George
714-782-7647

Mr. Rajan Abraham
949-713-6867

Mr. Thomas Mammen
562-431-6469

Mrs. Sheeba George
714-635-9660

www.horebmtc.org