



aalhari

*St. Peter's Marthoma Church  
Goregaon*

YOU MATTER A  
GREAT DEAL TO  
**GOD**

COMMITTING TO SERVE

Is your **Family**  
a **Team**, or  
a **Club**?

NATASHA

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## **Foreword by Vicar**

Dearly Beloved,

The law of supply and demand is something we face every day. Because there are those who need, there must also be those who provide. It's really not that complicated. There are employers and employees. There are counselors and those who are counseled. There are teachers and students

But when it comes to refugees? There aren't enough refugees to meet the demand. Here I am not talking about the political refugees, but someone already here who needs a refuge. A place of shelter. I'm talking about a person who is broken or guilty or bleeding with a heartache or exploding with anxiety. In the Old Testament times, there were cities of refuge. People who were in danger, those guilty of wrongdoing could escape to one of these seven cities and find personal relief. They could admit their faults and not be threatened by pious looks or prejudiced sermons.

We have lots of places to meet and sing. To pray. We can listen to sermons. But where do these refugees go? To whom do the wounded turn? We have a place for the healthy and productive. We have and use the gifted, the strong and the confident. But where is our compassion? Where is the place of those whose lives have gotten soiled in the streets? We bypass the dirty with a shrug.

We are bad Samaritans. In our outfit, we don't know what to do with the wounded. Are we ready to clean them up, taking the time to listen and encourage them? There are people within the church, in our house and in our neighborhood who need our care and attention. When the church rises up and responds, it becomes a true church. So, I request my young brothers and sisters to have a Christ-like mind and become a relevant group.

I appreciate the efforts taken by our Youth League in publishing this magazine. I acknowledge their hard work behind this. Let this magazine enlighten our mind. I wish and pray that our youngsters will be able to publish it on a regular basis. I urge all the parishioners to support their efforts through their contributions in terms of articles or finance.

May God bless us all.

Best Wishes

Rev. Dr. John Joseph



## **SPARK 2018: United in Sports**

St Peters' Annual Recreational Koinonia (SPARK) was instituted in December 2017 with the objective of bringing together all the members of the St. Peters' family in a fun-filled and connect-enabling environment.

26<sup>th</sup> January 2018 witnessed the very first initiative under the SPARK banner, namely the annual sports event. It was an attempt to bring together individuals and families of our church in an energy packed and fun filled sporting event.

It was sheer enthusiasm from the word 'Go' with members registering for the event in large numbers and the teams soon bonding strongly with determination and a healthy competitive spirit.

The event day saw the young as well as the young at heart, participate whole-heartedly with excitement writ large on their faces.

The manner in which the participants rallied together with great enthusiasm and healthy competition reflected the true spirit of Spark.

Spark looks forward to bringing together the members of the church through various sporting and cultural activities. Spark will also look at developing itself into a platform, where we could nurture and develop the talents of our members, especially our youngsters and children by encouraging them; allowing them the opportunity to take up leadership roles and thereby moulding them for a future outside. SPARK is not just about fun and organizing a set of activities, it is about rejoicing and coming together by building everlasting and fundamentally strong relationships between each other and thereby building a model community in the place where our Lord has called us to be. This will also be a movement owned and operated by the members of our church in a highly collaborative manner. A few glimpses that sum up the day better than any text would.







## Table in the Street

**Mathew 25: 34-36** “ *The king will say to those on his right, come you are blessed by my father, take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world, For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...*”

As we look around, we often see people dwelling on the footpaths and streets, devoid of basic hygienic food. In an effort to provide them with clean and healthy food, the SYF initiated the Table in the Street (TIS) Ministry, with the blessing of the Lord and under the guidance of Sajeew Achen. The TIS distribution model involves members bringing cooked food from home on Sunday morning, packing it in aluminium containers and distributing it to the street dwellers.

As news spread, the food distribution motivated more people to contribute to the cause and many people started celebrating their birthdays, wedding anniversaries and other occasions by sponsoring one-time meals to the street dwellers.



*SYF volunteers distributing food*



*Celebrating Christmas in the street*

Today, as we look back, we have completed roughly **97** weeks of distribution and distributed about **8846** food packets.

Our challenge is to cover at least all the Prayer Group Areas, and involve maximum volunteers in the distribution.

Let the Lord continue to guide us and strengthen us to serve him. For the word of the Lord says in Mathew 25: 40, “*Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.*”





## Aabhari Applauds

### IPL 2018

For the first time in the history of the Mar Thoma Sabha, two youths of our church, Rohit and Ronit Rajan, got selected for IPL 2018 in the teams, Hyderabad Sunrisers and Kings XI Punjab respectively. Aabhari congratulates them on behalf of St. Peter's Mar Thoma parish.



### ORDINATION



It was a moment of pride for the St. Peter's Mar Thoma parish, when Reuben Abraham Mammen was ordained as a priest of the Mar Thoma Sabha. His qualities like simplicity, kindness and helpful nature are worth emulating. Aabhari wishes him the very best for all his future endeavours.

## **THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS**

**Matthew 25:14-30**

This parable comes right at the heels of Jesus talking about His *second coming* in Chapter 24, especially in verse 42 which says, “*Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.*”

Jesus uses this parable to explain to His disciples what He expects them to do while they await His second coming, lest they misunderstood the words “keep watch” and lived passive lives whilst waiting for His return. He emphasized through this parable that He wanted them to be active, to work tirelessly and to utilize their lives for furthering His Kingdom.

**Verse 14:** “who called his servants” - This parable refers to people who are already in the Kingdom. God will call His people (believers) to join Him in His Kingdom in Heaven. Non-believers are never in the presence of the Lord. However, disobedient, sinful and lazy believers are for a while in His presence by virtue of the fact that they are in the Church. But Jesus says that this will change when He returns and the alternative will be suffering and regret.

**Verse 14:** “entrusted His wealth to them”- Everything in the universe belongs to God. On Judgment Day, each one has to give an account of what he has done with the life which was a gift from God, a property of God. Each one will be held accountable for the things entrusted in his care.

**Verse 15:** “To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability.” – Each servant receives an amount based on the perceived skills that the master believes he has. Similarly, each one of us is born with distinct talents and gifts that set us apart from each other. These may be – gifts of speech, interpersonal skills, time, money, education etc. We are expected to invest all we have for His Kingdom, for what we have is not ours to begin with; everything is a gift from God. One may not have as many talents as the next person, but one has to remember that He gives gifts to each according to his abilities and he expects each to only use what has been given. He expects each one to be FAITHFUL with what had been given to him.

**Verses 16-17:** The first two servants were faithful to their master and they doubled the amount entrusted to them by exercising due diligence.

**Verse 18:** “But the man who received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money” – This man was given the least amount or a smaller responsibility. He chose to hide it as it posed the least amount of risk; with no one to steal it, there was no chance of losing it. The third man chose the path of least labour as he was plain lazy.

**Verses 21-23:** “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness” – This was the reward given to the first two servants, same reward though the amounts entrusted to each was different. Both were rewarded with a larger scope of responsibility as the Master now trusted them even more than before. Consequentially, they earned a closer intimate relationship with their Master.

**Verse 26-30:** “You wicked and lazy servant...” – The third servant made excuses and blamed his laziness and wickedness on the Master. Therefore, the Master was angry with him, and not because he didn’t make any profit. The master said that he should have at least put the money in a bank where it would have been safe and at the same time earned an interest. But this would have required some thought and effort and this servant lacked the initiative or will to act. Therefore, he was cast



out and punished severely. Also, whatever was given to him was taken away and given to the one who had more.

**The hidden treasures in this parable could thus be summed up as follows:**

- **The Kingdom of Heaven is near, so we must stay alert.**
- **As we await His second coming, we are to use the gifts (our life itself) for the Glory of God, to expand His Kingdom and be fruitful till the end.**
- **Each one of us has received a measure of blessing of some kind to be used for the good of all.**
- **There is no scope for mediocrity; we are to utilize each gift given to us to its full capacity with 100% faithfulness.**
- **There is a common judgment for all of God's people.**
- **When He comes He will weed out those who have confessed His name and associated with His kingdom but have not been faithful with what He entrusted them with.**
- **If we are not growing in our capacity or usefulness, then we are not fulfilling God's plan / purpose in our lives.**
- **In the plan of God, each and every individual and his contribution is critical to His divine plan.**

**KNOW THIS – YOU MATTER A GREAT DEAL TO GOD!**

**-MARINA CHERIAN**

### **SOME TAKEAWAYS FROM THE MOVIE, WAR ROOM**

*War Room* wonderfully depicts the power of prayer and the life-changing impact it can have on an individual. We often try to replace prayer by listening to a sermon, a couple of gospel songs or spending time with someone who knows the Lord in an intimate way. Undoubtedly, these are indispensable for our growth. Yes, whether we believe it or not, God is a God who is interested in the minutest details of our lives, speaks to us in marvellous ways and delights in making himself real to us (**Zephaniah 3:17** says that the Lord takes great delight in us).

Isn't it simply awesome to know that the maker of heaven and earth delights in you? Sounds too cliché? Maybe... Nevertheless, it is true. One can learn this best after having actually experienced it. The protagonist of this movie, Elizabeth, inspired by her friend and mentor, Clara, converts her closet into a prayer room. There is a particular scene in the movie when Elizabeth says *"When I first got in there, ten minutes seemed like an eternity but now I have a hard time even wanting to leave."* Seriously? Have a hard time wanting to leave? But that is how comforting it is to be in His presence. I still recall those years when I first became a Christian. It all started so well but there were days when I used to continuously look at my watch or be distracted all the time, either it was my phone, a doorbell or something or the other which never failed to distract me. In fact, even Saint Teresa acknowledged that during every fifteen minutes of prayer there are fourteen minutes of distraction. But guess what? As days passed, I started enjoying my quiet time. There have been times when I've horribly backslidden and those were also the times when I wasn't very inclined to His Word. Just ask Him, God I want to know you; help me, I am weak and He is truly compassionate. But let us not forget we have an individual effort to make too. Being in the presence of the Lord is truly special. He knows those painful situations and those deepest secrets. As we remain dedicated to the Lord he truly changes us from within, definitely not at the drop of a hat but slowly and gradually.

As the movie progresses, we notice a transition in the heart of Elizabeth. God is interested in transforming each one of us, as we enter into communion with him. The same Elizabeth who used to go to church occasionally and claimed to know God, (the scene in the first half of the movie) now sees herself being transformed and moulded by him. And that is what God intends to do in each of our lives. As Francis Chan rightly puts it “God wants to change us so much that it intrigues others”. Does it mean that we’ll be perfect? No. We are humans after all who stumble in many ways (**Psalm 37:23** says that if the Lord delights in us, he will make our steps firm, though we stumble we will not fall since he upholds us with his hand). Isn’t there great comfort in knowing that the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth examining the good and the bad? He longs to be gracious to us and is eager to make himself known to each one of us. The question is that are we equally eager? God being a gentleman will never barge into your life. He will just stand at the door and knock. Are you willing to take him in? Does this mean that life will be smooth once we do? Absolutely not. God doesn’t promise us better life circumstances but he sure does promise us a better life. He wants our joy to depend on him. Now do I mean to say that we isolate ourselves and just sit and do our own thing? No. God intends for us to have good friends who can encourage us. The battle is not meant to be fought alone. But we should only be careful to not put them in place of God.



There is a scene which I quite like in the movie wherein Elizabeth comes out and says a few words to the devil while venting out her anger as though she is engaged in a conversation with him. She ends the conversation by saying “My joy is found in Jesus”, which is so true. Quite often we depend on people for our happiness and end up getting dejected as they do not come up to our expectations. But God never intended for us to get from people the joy that only He can give. Yes, he wants us to have those close friends and loved ones who care for us dearly. But the problem often arises when we think that they can satisfy our deepest longings. Those deep longings of your heart can be satisfied only and only by sitting at his feet.

Coming to the power of prayer, does it mean that prayer has power only when we get a ‘yes’ as an answer? Certainly not. Firstly, we must remember that God is a rewarder of those who diligently

seek him. Anyone who comes to him must believe that He exists. And most of all He is a Father. Yes, I know we have heard this everywhere of God being a Father. Quite common, isn't it? But He is indeed a Father and has emotions like a father and at the very same time is God in all His glory and power. As Charles Stanley rightly says "We can be tired, weary and emotionally distraught, but as we spend time alone with God He injects into our bodies energy, power and strength". He slowly and steadily gives us His nature. I really love the many ways this is depicted in this movie. In one incident, Tony (Elizabeth's husband) comes home upset after having lost his job. He directly goes into his room without saying a word since he already knows that his wife would aggravate the problem by panicking and saying a few mean things. But as he shares what happened, we see that she didn't react in the way he expected her to. Instead, she tries to find a solution with a calm mind which intrigues him quite a lot. That is how God wants to give us his nature, changing us so much that those who formerly knew us would be intrigued and wonder what happened. And no, it won't happen overnight but gradually. Allow Him to change you. He might wreck your life at times but it is worth it, He is worth it. There are times when I get angry with my little sisters and say a few mean things. Then I wonder "that isn't me". But then it strikes me that it is exactly like me. It is exactly who I am. God uses suffering and situations like these (for example) to show who we really are. We are being cleansed in the process. Many a times we put our Sunday best on and many people get deceived into thinking that that is who we really are. But God knows it all. And still loves you just the way you are. Isn't that truly amazing? One verse which is always at the back of my mind is **Psalm 16:2**, (God) "I say you are my God and apart from you I have no good thing". Yes, we truly have no good thing apart from him. As you sit in his presence, He will transform you slowly if you let Him. He definitely won't let you be the same.

I would now like to list down a few of my reflections and the lessons I learnt from this movie:

**God is REAL:** Very often as Christians, we battle with two questions which are "Where is God" and "There is God". When we go through troubles, we ask ourselves where he really is. There are two ways in which God works. He either has a visible hand of miracles or an invisible hand of providence. In all this he is real. He is a God of the good times and a God of the dark times. The same God of Abraham is with you. He really is.

**He is a God of the DETAILS:** In the movie, we see that the daughter is thoroughly exhausted with her parents arguing all the time. As days go by she puts a list before the Lord. One of them being to help her parents love each other again. And in the end, we see that it does happen. Yes, he listens to the smallest things. For those of you who don't know, I am currently pursuing my masters in Pune living in a paying guest accommodation. As a result, I bank on the college canteen for my lunch every afternoon whose standards diminished over the months. I just put it before the Lord one night. The next day I hear, the canteen has been shut down. The week after new people took charge and as days went by a new menu with even chicken and mutton (my favourite) was served. Yes, He heard. God knows exactly what you need.

**He is MERCIFUL:** As we see the movie, we realize that Tony could have been prosecuted for what he did. But is that what he got? No. That was just grace. Psalm 103 rightly puts it, "God doesn't treat us as our sins deserve." He is merciful and loving and expects us to do the same.

**INFLUENCE:** In this movie, I love the way Elizabeth influences her daughter as the Lord changes her heart. I still remember my days in France. I was the only Asian. Unfortunately, almost every single classmate of mine used to either drink or smoke. As a result, wherever we used to



gather there was always some beer or a packet of cigarettes on the table. As the days went by they realized I would not touch any of them. But as time passed there was this one single person who slowly made a resolve not to. So, every time I was there, he tried not to. Your influence on people matters, even if it's just one person.

**Are you RIGHT with God?** Acknowledge that you are wrong to get right with him. In order to have a true relationship with God, we need to be transparent before him. Not trying to be something we are not, just like we see in *War Room*. When Tony was up to something in secret, his wife told him to let it out. Doesn't mean we let it all out to people. Maybe to a believer you trust or are close with. There are times when it can just be you and God.



**Accept that you are WRONG:** We all need to acknowledge our follies. Let us not be know-it-alls. As far as the movie is concerned, Tony after having realized his mistake kneels down before the Lord and acknowledges his fault. He simply says, "Lord I am not a good man. I am selfish and prideful." So transparent and straightforward! God is looking for such people. Don't beat around the bush with him. He already knows what is in your heart, he just wants you to know. Let us make simple prayers to ask the Lord to examine our heart and mind.

**Going to church doesn't make you a CHRISTIAN:** Before I became a Christian, I was just living a deceived life. I attended church regularly but during the course of the week I did whatever I wanted to do. Nothing ever seemed to bother my hardened heart. Until the Lord stripped off of many things and showed me that it was only a relationship with Him and being in communion with him that made me a Christian. I am also thankful for the many friends the Lord sent my way to mentor me and anchor me in Him. As the Lord taught me many things and continues to teach me over these years, I realize that the main challenge is Monday to Saturday. That is where the 'real us' is tested. Not on Sunday.

I would like to conclude by saying that at the end of it, we are all imperfect. **Romans 3** tells us that no one is righteous. We all fall short of the glory of God. So, are we comfortable where we are? Are we living a life that delights Him? **Ephesians 5:10** says, “Find out what pleases the Lord.” Is it His approval or the approval of people we seek? Often during prayer, I am reminded of this wonderful hymn:

**I hear the Savior say,  
“Thy strength indeed is small;  
Child of weakness, watch and pray,  
Find in Me Thine all in all.”  
Jesus paid it all,  
All to Him I owe;  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow.**

Our strength is indeed very small and we cannot bear fruit apart from Him. As the Psalmist says, “For it is he who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.”

**-SHREYA VARGHESE**

### **RAMBLINGS OF A RESTLESS SOUL**

I swirl out of this shell in to raging hell; into the bliss that has eluded me dreaming of things I have never seen. Time bends and turns and charges on leaving me numb and cold and awake till dawn. The first ray of the sun, the purest! The golden crown of clouds, priceless! Watching wings slice the air, the sight and smell of all that's fair, yet below humanity sleeps while their fate weeps; we who were meant to walk on clouds; our feet now anchored in doubts, drinking away our midnight tears knowing we drink to death, our joy our sorrows our dreams of wealth. My soul cries with agony to the Beginning and End. May the heavens hear our melancholy and echo back an Eternal melody! For only those that see will finally hear the silent horn that split the sky. Stop and stare at the darkness ahead, the race that wins you gold, only to lose your soul, brushing shoulders with the open minded, washed away by a crowd on an the open road, but few will choose to walk the tightest rope, dressed in light and armed with hope, the mocked monks of this earth, they waited for what was worth. “Where are we from? Who are we?” will be answered, they say, if you follow your heart. But the heart that is made of flesh deceives what the spirit conceives, urging us to chase lust before we turn to dust. As the world spins and spins away from the Truth where its foundation once lay, know that we have this one life, not to drink and eat and bid goodbye, but to pave a path for the Greater to come. Until then we wait for the curtains to fall and reveal, The Sum of All.

**-ROSHAN JOSEPH JOHN**

### **O RE CHORI, TU KYA CHEEZ HAI?**

(An attempt to understand how to look at women in the light of The Incarnation and its implication on our lived reality)

When I was 19 there was a rape case that garnered so much media attention that it shook the nation. I remember the impact that case had on me (and 19 year-olds around me) distinctly because it was just about when I had begun to believe that I deserve to be in the spaces I desire to occupy and the reason for the catcalling, leering, groping that I experienced occasionally, was not my fault or was in no way a consequence of anything that I did. However, those around me, my family, friends and the Church folks for sure said that it was definitely Jyoti Singh's fault that she chose to be out late at night especially in a city like Delhi which was supposedly unsafe for women. And when you're still a teenager and still in the process of trying to stand on your own feet, resisting such powerful narratives might just not happen, even if you are almost sure that you don't believe them to be true.

In the wake of the Kathua, Unnao case, I was speaking to a colleague of mine from Delhi (a Marthomite) who told me that her church had a candlelight vigil in December 2012 but described how disheartening it was when they gathered back in church post the vigil and heard people exclaim things to the effect of "What was she expecting, when she ventured out at night by herself", "That boy must have been her boyfriend, Girls these days!" Narratives recounted by friends from other cities aren't any different either.

In light of the Kathua, I've been all Hallelujah that people around me don't believe that it was the girl's fault. However, the most popular response seems to be that of 'punishing the crime-doers in order to get justice'. Though I firmly do believe that the crime-doers should be tried judicially and given appropriate sentences, I'm really unsure whether that is, all that there is, to justice. A perusal of reports from the NCRD will show us that, the number of 'registered' cases of sexual violence, are increasing at an alarming rate by the day. What would justice look like in such a scenario? Will meting out death sentences, lifetime imprisonment or castration be justice enough? Will those judgements deter people from committing such crimes in the future? It's become obvious that the plasters (like installing a few CCTV cameras here and there/ Installing GPS devices on your children or caging women) we put on this problem are clearly not working because advertently or inadvertently, we subscribe to the Rape culture.

**Rape Culture** refers to situations where rape is pervasive and is thought to be a natural phenomenon due to the attitudes of a society about gender and sexuality. Rape cultures are equally detrimental to all - be it men, women or people who do not identify as either. In this piece however, I've deliberately chosen to focus on women only.

Even for the most 'woke' (*usage meaning-being aware of the social. and political environments regarding all demographics and socio-economic standings*) among us, it might be a little tricky a task, to identify the incidence of rape culture in our daily lives. What I've done below is to systematically arrange things that I've heard in various situations under specific features of rape culture.

#### > **Victim Blaming:**

- "Jyoti Singh got raped because she stayed out late and decided to board a bus that wasn't a DTC Bus. She brought it upon herself."
- "Don't stay out for too long/ don't go to X place. What if something happens to you? There's no such thing as too much caution."



### > **Slut-Shaming:**

Criticizing (mostly) girls/women who are perceived to violate gendered expectation of behaviour or appearance.

(Very often we see people resorting to theatrics like defaming the woman/girl as a 'slut' because they do not comply to societal expectations. The word slut in this usage has been reclaimed. It questions this notion that women who do not follow the conventional idea of marriage or family could be of inferior status. It is also questioning the basis on which a slut could be an inferior thing to be.)

- “She takes most calls in the family. No wonder nothing works out for them.”
- “She’s so bossy/dominating. She better learn to be more polite/humble.”
- “What a short dress. How shameless!”
- “Her bra strap can be seen. How dare she!”
- “Wearing tight jeans to church. So uncultured!”
- “She’s always hanging out with boys. How characterless!”
- “She shouldn’t be wearing a dress if she’s this fat no? You only tell me!”

### > **Sexual Objectification:**

When women are objectified, they’re thought to be only worth their sexual capacity.

- A popular song these days goes like this:  
*“I wanna see you wild like Rihanna, get all upon the  
Bom, diggy-diggy, bom-bom  
She burn it up like the summer, she turn me on with her,  
Bom, diggy-diggy, bom-bom”*

- A popular TV-ad for a mango juice features this:



- The most unsuspecting one is, concerned adults telling you, in Malayalam a phrase literally translated to this-“*Whether the leaf falls on the thorn, or the thorn falls on the leaf, it is the leaf*”

*that suffers*” (Meaning: If a girl and a boy have a pre-marital relationship, the girl is the one who suffers a loss, not the boy.)



*Amen, Malayalam movie*

**Ponder on: Who/What is the ‘Subject’ in all these cases?**

- **Trivializing Rape:** Downplaying the significance of something is called trivializing. It is typically used (consciously or unconsciously) as a strategy to deal with guilt (perhaps of exercising easier choices).
- “Not all men...”
- “It happens to some men also, why are you complaining so much” (*because an average man doesn’t have to think of possible ways he could get molested or raped every time he goes out. But for women, it’s like a chronic anxiety*)
- “Things like this keep happening all the time. It has been happening for ages.”

**Denial of widespread occurrence of this phenomenon:**

Failure to acknowledge the harm caused to individuals in case of rape or in a culture of rape.

- “It might be happening in Kathua, but not here.”
- “It happens elsewhere. Are you telling me that boys/men in our church, do it?”

Several sociologists subscribe to the idea that the inferior status of women took shape with the advent of settled agriculture as this is when women started being regarded as property. This is also symbolic of the disconnect or alienation of man from God (Expulsion from the Garden of Eden). The material conditions in agrarian and pastoral communities required man to have definite demarcation of property be it land, animals or women. One reason why impositions were made on women’s sexuality their loyal productiveness, ascertaining which child belonged where. With time, gendering of roles in the society occurred, as people were trying to be as efficient as possible and it seemed fairly convenient that women who had to anyway stay back home when they were pregnant or had to tend to infants stay at home and take care of household chores. With time these gendered roles became pretty frozen and so did the power equation in the situation. Since women already held an inferior status, it became fairly difficult for the power equations to change even when material conditions changed (Eg: Even in this Capitalist world, where women and men are employed for the same kinds of task, women would be paid much lesser because typically they wouldn’t make a fuss about it as they have been socialized to be docile). Historically, the identity of a woman is typically the status she holds in relation to a male. So deeply has the identity of a woman/girl been fused to that of her male ‘guardian’ that sexually violating her then meant bringing dishonour to her male guardian.

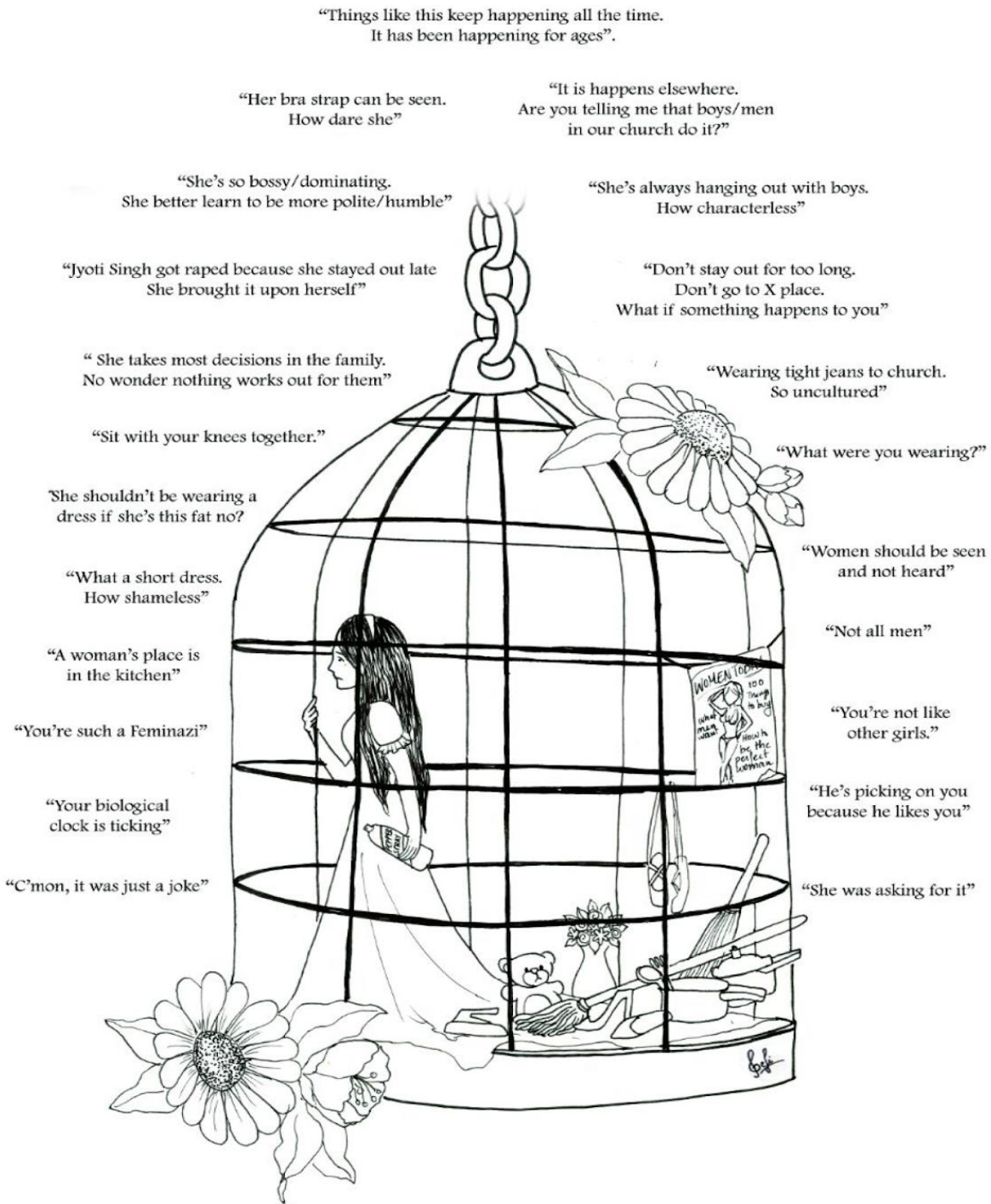
In a world where women are valued only for their chastity, the Incarnation proved that there's nothing shameful to have a Rahab as a foremother. The Incarnation was a revelation that you are made in the image of God and so is your neighbour. The Incarnation was a revelation that your souls and bodies were one whole (Which is why Jesus took form of flesh; it was a revelation that your body is capable of divine). If you and I were created in the likeness of God and our bodies looked different and didn't perform the same functions, there is no chance that only one gender will be used as a vessel for the Glory of God. Through his life among humanity, Jesus was trying to sort the severed tie between the Creator and the created. When one is not able to see the tie between oneself and the image in which he is made; alienating other creatures even if they're made in the same image, is bound to happen. His life was committed to restoring the political alienation (which was the form in which it was being manifested) of that time through dispelling the spiritual alienation (which was the real deal). He clearly demonstrated that religion was made for man and not man for religion (You can substitute the word religion with 'tradition' or 'Sabbath'. It should read the same). What the incarnation essentially revealed to us is the fact that human existence is the site for divinity. Then can /should this body be used for frivolous ends?

When we examine rape cultures, it essentially assumes women (and a lot of other people) to be a means to keep up our honour, a means to fulfill our sexual desires or means to some material gain. We fail to think of them as people with flesh, blood and mind, a person made in the likeness of the creator, an Incarnation, capable of a lot more than what her vagina or womb could ever do. (In a similar way, it sometimes, if not mostly, evades our notice that our maids, the sewage workers, construction workers, farmers, etc. are a lot more than the labour that their bodies are capable of).

If our lives are alienated from our Creator, we will not be able to see the other person in our likeness. We will not be able to look at people beyond our instrumental needs. We will not be able to grasp the concept on consent or capacitate our children to be able to give consent. "We have often domesticated the Gospel to make it into a means of social order and control, so we have avoided the scandal of the Incarnation to avoid God in most dangerous disguise: this material world." –Richard Rohr. Essentially, we cannot address the problem of sexual violence with plasters like, awarding the highest degree of punishment or caging women/girls (that is basically forcing them into an experience of alienation all the more) or transferring the onus onto them which we as a community seem to be doing. This is because, it takes a village to raise a child. When people are brought up in an environment where narratives of the rape culture are prevalent, it comes as no surprise that people will corner vulnerable targets like Asifa so that her folks 'will learn their lesson'. It also is no surprise that people will think that Jyoti Singh 'asked for it' when she occupied a public space at night. We also need to remember that in situations of oppression, the perceived oppressor could also be oppressed in many ways. A worthy exercise would be to think about the reasons why the members of the Hindu Ekta Manch marched in support of the accused or why lawyers took to the streets to prevent the chargesheet from being filed (Kathua case). The answers to these might be anything but simple. A nuanced understanding of the situation is an imperative while trying to address completely unacceptable instances like these.

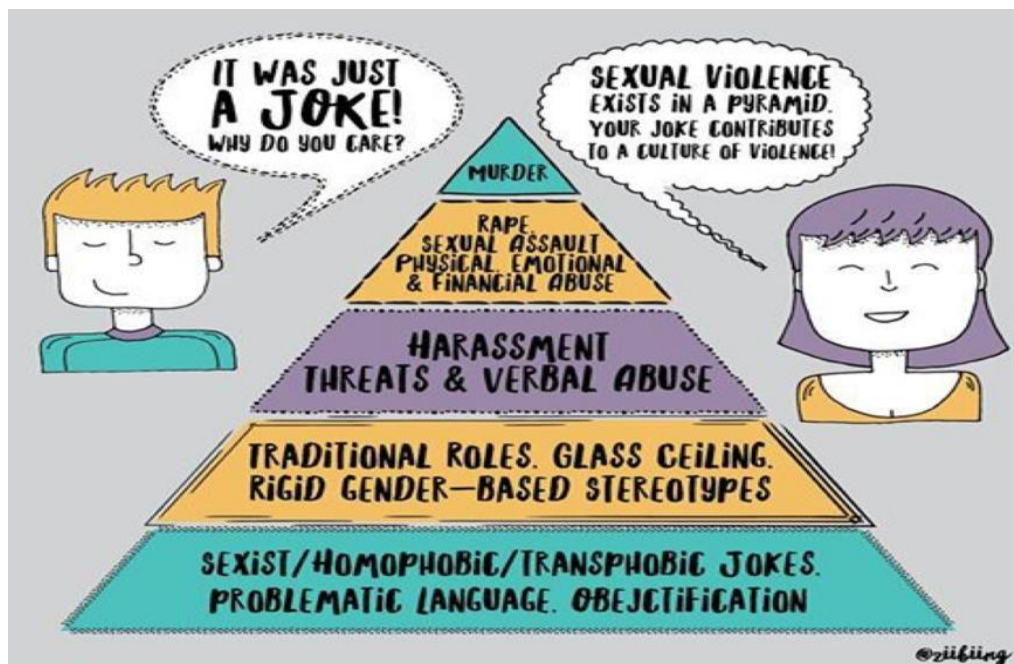
The illustration below is representative of the function of rape culture on the freedom of women. Very often, we set boundaries to her existence and the cage is legitimized by the voices around it.





In conclusion, I can leave you with a few points that can be assumed as definite in the light of what I've written so far:

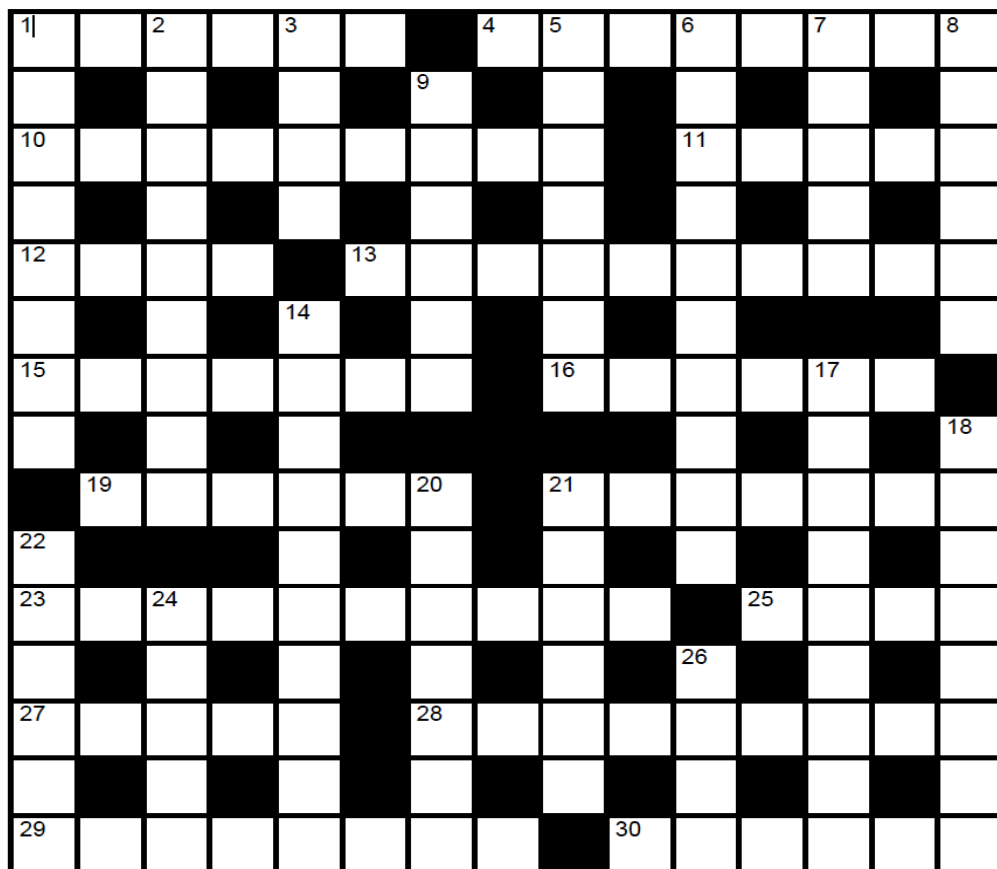
1. Sex education and Conscientisation of Gender Socialization processes might be ways we address the problem of sexual violence as well as inequality between the sexes.
2. A lot of effort has to go into the ways we socialize and raise our boys.
3. Remember that women shouldn't be violated not because they're someone's relative but because they're human beings.
4. Remember that, if women are human beings, they deserve to have the same rights as men, be it opportunities or respect. Therefore, acts of 'protecting' might prove to be of converse effect. (Do not muddle this idea with affirmative action as that has a history).
5. Sexual violence cannot be thought of in isolation. There is a culture which makes it possible for it to happen. Sexual violence can also not be addressed without thinking about experiences of alienation, marginalization and the phenomenon of power and domination.
6. Let us not distance ourselves and think that cases like Asifa's or Jyothi Singh's as stray incidents unrelated to us. We definitely are in some ways responsible for the marginalization and alienated experiences of some and we cannot in any way defend ourselves as we anyway seem to be living in and propagating a culture of Rape.
7. We shouldn't be preoccupied about how we're going to punish crime-doers as much as we should be bothered about how we can create a world where situations wouldn't encourage us to violate other human beings (at least?). This would be possible only if we're able to truly see the other in the likeness of the creator.



-SHARON DANIEL



## BIBLE CROSSWORD



### **Across**

- 1 An ancient weight (6)
- 4 Seemed (8)
- 10 New Testament book (9)
- 11 Unit of length (5)
- 12 '...it is a \_\_\_\_ thing  
the king requireth'  
(Dan 2:11) (4)
- 13 Contemplation (10)
- 15 Abigail supplied David  
with one hundred  
clusters of these (7)



16 A son of King David (6)  
19 Concurred (6)  
21 Light sources (7)  
23 Propitiations (10)  
25 A false god (4)  
27 Gather (5)  
28 Abimelech was hit by  
this (9)  
29 Instructors (8)  
30 Hastily (6)

**Down**

1 Skilled animal  
workers (8)  
2 Inspiring (9)  
3 Compass point (4)  
5 Intense emotion (7)  
6 The words of Jeremiah  
said not to listen to  
these (10)  
7 Jewish leader (5)  
8 'He is proud, knowing  
nothing, but \_\_\_\_\_  
about questions and  
strifes of words...'  
(1 Tim 6:4) (6)  
9 Bread makers (6)  
14 In this year of King  
Nebuchadnezzar's reign,  
Nebuzaradan arrived in  
Jerusalem (10)  
17 Ancient city of Og, King  
of Bashan (9)  
18 Stringed instrument (8)  
20 Joseph, perhaps? (7)  
21 Tiny amount (6)  
22 Jesus did this with  
authority (6)  
24 Last letter of the Greek  
alphabet (5)  
26 Province of the Roman  
Empire (4)

Solutions on the last page.

**GOD CALLS US TO BE HIS AMBASSADORS TO THE WORLD**

We are often dismayed at the world around us and keep thinking, how come the world is so cruel, how come it is so insensitive and conclude that nothing can be done to change the way it is. So, let it be that way. Let me spend my life, the way I would like to be and go away.

Have we ever thought that as Christians, the only solution to this world lies with us?

The only person who can resolve the way the world had landed up itself is Christ and we have him. Like Paul said, “I have no gold to offer, I have no silver to offer, I have only Christ to offer.” It is not that Paul does not have gold or silver or that he was not rich enough or that he did not have the wherewithal to raise those resources it is not. He had all of it and more than that, but his conviction that none of that is enough is noteworthy to emulate and bring that as our own conviction. It is only Christ who can offer that solution to the problems of the world that we are faced with.

Then why is it not happening? The first question that we need to ask ourselves is this. Did we as individuals experience a personal confrontation with Christ? If not, that is something each one of us has to pray for and demand from the Lord. I am often encouraged by the story of St. Thomas, the disciple of Christ, who founded our church and in whose name, we as a church are known for. He is often mockingly referred to as “Doubting Thomas”. But look at him and his demands for Christ to reveal himself personally to him. That is a demand that each one of us has to carry in our hearts and pray. “Lord reveal yourself to us, and unless we see those nail marks in your hand and unless we touch and feel them, we will not believe.” That kind of fervent prayer should rise from our hearts. Christ will certainly hear that prayer and reveal himself to you exactly the way he revealed himself to St. Thomas.

The experience of a personal encounter with our Lord is unique. The everlasting happiness and joy that it brings is beyond definition. That experience is eternal. That is why any personal encounter can only lead to a joyous celebration in our lives which leads us to bend down on our knees and worship. Worship is the only response that we can have as a response to a personal encounter with Christ. There is no human response possible, other than worship, except going down on your knees and looking at him so admiringly and saying, “My God and my Lord.” That is precisely what St. Thomas did as Christ revealed himself.

It is worthwhile to note his action after his personal encounter with Christ. He no longer lived a limited life. He was filled with a divine energy and special power to share this amazing sense of unlimited joy and happiness that he experienced to multitudes around him. That is why he no longer remained in confines and comforts of his accomplishments or surroundings. But he took his bag (if there was one at that point in time), and left his home, came to an alien, Asian country and preached the Gospel. Just imagine, if St. Thomas did not come, probably many among us would have gone away without knowing our Lord. That is the difference that we can make to this world, if we pray for a personal encounter with Christ.

Many of us would have reservations in sharing the gospel and may look upon it as an activity not befitting our status and position that we occupy in our society. Let us remember that sharing of the gospel is not about converting a person to a religious view. We are not a religion, we follow the one who said: “I am the way and the truth.” Secondly and most importantly, we are passing on God’s blessing to others, when we share the gospel with others.

Why am I saying this? Bible is the story of God looking out for people for himself. He created human beings and he created nations and then he called Abraham to be a blessing to all nations across the world. Israel could not accomplish that mission. Hence, God sends his own Son to this world and through him called Gentiles and formed the church to be a blessing to nations across the world. So, we have a mandate, a mandate to be a blessing to nations across the world. That can be accomplished only and only when we share the good news of the Gospel. So, let us not be ashamed of sharing the gospel (like I was at some point of time), for it is not an attempt to convert

one to any religion, it is rather fulfilling of God's mandate to be a blessing to nations across the world.

We are called to be Ambassadors of God in this world that hurts. Let us pray for a personal encounter with our Lord and he will reveal himself if our prayers are honest. Let us worship him and then share the good news with people around us. That alone has the power to save a hurting world. Let us say like Paul said, "I do not have gold or silver to offer, but I offer the only thing that I have, that is Christ." That is not because we don't have gold or silver, but they will be insufficient to deal with a hurting world and only Christ can offer those everlasting solutions to this world.

So, let us set out to be the Ambassadors of God in a Hurting world.

***-GEOGI ZACHARIAH***

### **FAITH WITHOUT ACTION**

In this selfie-obsessed generation,  
When we're worried so about the external,  
We often forget that life is much more than...Or...  
Have we stopped to think what's eternal?

We focus so much on ourselves,  
Trapped in our own little bubble.  
Have we become so hard hearted, insensitive...  
We sense not even when our neighbour is in trouble?

Complaining about trivial things,  
"Not this...not this for dinner again, mom!" we say.  
'The Venezuelans flee the country...Hunger to escape.'  
Read...read the headlines in the newspapers today.

We want not to get out of our comfort zones,  
We continue to live this life of bliss,  
Don't we realize that we are that 'someone' in  
"Someone should do something about this?"

A tree is identified by its fruit  
And people by their actions.  
How would a bystander distinguish us from others?  
If they observed us in our daily interactions.

Let's not wait any longer, the time is now  
So get up and get out! Lend a helping hand!

If Jesus lives in you, and you say you're Christian,  
It cannot be faith without actions, don't you understand?  
Dying for our sake because He loved us first,  
It all boils down to one thing,  
How much do we really love Him?  
For If we love God most, we will love others Best.

**-SHRADDHA VARGHESE**



### **AABHARI ASKS**

1. I get wet when I am dry. What am I?
2. The more you take the more you leave behind?
3. You can't catch me. Who am I?

**-SHANE SAMUEL**

## **MINORITY RIGHTS IN INDIA: AN UNKNOWN TREASURE TROVE**

Minority rights have gained greater visibility and relevance all over the world. India is no exception to it being a multi-religious, multi-linguistic and multi-cultural society. According to a recent survey, there are only 2.3% Christians in a country of 1.2 billion people.

### **Provisions in the Constitution**

The Constitution of India does not precisely define the word 'Minority' but it has used the word "minorities" considering two attributes: 1. religion or 2. language of a person. For minorities, the Constitution has envisaged some of the rights and safeguards so as to provide enough equality and to dwindle the discrimination. The makers have spelt out various things in Fundamental Rights (Part III); Directive Principles of State policy (Part IV) and also the Fundamental Duties (Part IV-A).

The Constitution of India treats the minorities on par with the other people. *Article 14* of the Constitution assures them equality before law, *Article 15* prohibits discriminatory treatment, *Article 16* provides for equal employment opportunities in the public sector, *Article 29(2)* provides

for equality of educational opportunities, *Article 325 and 326* provide for right to universal adult franchise to all, including the minorities and *Article 44* makes provision for common civil code.

There are certain specific provisions in the Constitution as well. *Articles 29 and 30* protect the linguistic, educational and cultural rights of the minorities. *Article 29* states that any community in India is entitled to have and preserve its own specific language, script or culture. *Article 30* declares (a) that all minorities in India have the constitutional right to establish and run their own educational institutions, (b) it also states that the State while giving grants shall not discriminate against any institution just because it belongs to a linguistic or religious minority, (c) *Articles 331 and 333* also make provisions to give protection to the interests of the Anglo-Indian communities.

### **National Commission for Minorities**

In order to protect the interests of minorities, The Union Government set up the **National Commission for Minorities** (NCM) under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992. Six religious communities, viz; Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) and Jains have been notified in Gazette of India as minority communities by the Union Government all over India.

The main functions of the Commission are to monitor the working of the safeguards provided in the Constitution, make recommendations for their effective implementation, look into specific complaints regarding deprivation of rights of the Minorities and take up such matters with the appropriate authorities, conduct research and analyze the issues relating to socio-economic and educational development of minorities and to make periodical or special reports to the Central Government on any matter pertaining to Minorities and in particular the difficulties confronted by them. The Commission also has the power to summon and enforce the attendance of any person and examine him under oath; require the discovery and production of any document; receive evidence on affidavit; and to requisition any public record or copy thereof from any court or office.

### **Ministry of Minority Affairs**

The Ministry of Minority Affairs was carved out of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and created on 29th January 2006 to ensure a more focused approach towards issues relating to the notified minority communities namely Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Sikhs, Parsis and Jain. The mandate of the Ministry includes the formulation of overall policy and planning, coordination, evaluation and review of the regulatory framework and development programs for the benefit of the minority communities.

There are various schemes initiated by the Government of India for the educational and economic empowerment of the minority communities, and infrastructure development schemes too are designed for their benefit. However, most of us are ignorant of these schemes, and hence do not avail them. Therefore, as the youth of our community, it is our responsibility to create awareness within our community about the rights of the minorities and of the various government schemes for our exclusive use and benefit.

**-ROCHELLE SERA CHERIAN**





## SODUKO

	5			4				
	1	3	8				6	4
9			3			5	2	1
4					9			6
7			4		3	9	8	
1	8			2	6	4		
			2					9
8		4				6	3	
	9					1		7

## IS YOUR FAMILY A TEAM OR A CLUB?

Meet the Smiths. The Smiths were the perfect family—their kids were crazy about youth group, the parents helped run it, and their daughters volunteered in the nursery while the boys played on the worship team multiple times a month. All 4 kids were polite and friendly, and the adults in the church gushed about the Smiths' parenting successes.

But when the Smith kids hit adult years, they just stalled. The oldest son kept living at home well into his twenties, and the next one down went to university but just coasted by. The girls became more and more obsessed with pop culture and cute boys, and none of them seemed particularly interested in becoming adults. After a few years, only one continued to be involved in church.

The majority of the research for the book *“Why I Didn’t Rebel”* was focused on the difference between teens who rebelled and those who didn’t. The author kept this family in her mind, because although the kids didn’t get into anything bad in high school, they also didn’t ever “grow up.” Looking at their family, and others like them, She noticed a pattern: families act as either teams or clubs. In a club, the main goal is to have fun and help people feel as if they belong. You’re with a bunch of like-minded people, you boost each other's self-esteem, but it doesn't go further than that.

A team, on the other hand, has a strong sense of identity as a group not because they want people to belong but because they're part of a bigger purpose. Clubs are about belonging—teams are about accomplishing a goal.

Too many families and churches act as clubs—they're loving and supportive of each other, but they don't seem to have a goal outside of making their little club more fun.

Maybe the reason so many kids leave their faith is that the church and family were more like "clubs". Youth groups and conferences were exciting, but they weren't something to base their *entire* lives around because they didn't seem to have a broader purpose other than just perpetuating itself. Families were places you felt safe, but it didn't seem to make a difference outside the walls of the house. That's the problem with clubs: clubs benefit the people in the clubs but not so much the people outside of them.

So, ask yourself today: is my family a team, or do we act more like a club?

*Excerpt from the Bible study plan - "Why I didn't Rebel? Devotional Content" part 1/3*  
**(Mat 13:1-9, Galatians 2:20-21)**

**My take:** Each and every family together make a church. There is neither a *perfect* family nor a perfect church. We all fail in different arenas. Habitually attending Sunday rituals or prayers without a question need not ensure a strong faith and may even lead things to be taken for granted. Nevertheless, what is promising is how impactful we can be in each other's lives, within our families first, then within our church and then wherever we are placed in the world. Realising our potential and realising it to the fullest makes us all play our parts best in this world.

**-JULIAN JOSEPH**

## **COMMITTING TO SERVE**

Youth is a stage of our lives when we are full of energy, vigour and spirit and when one moves from being dependent to being independent, often making opinions and questioning the different facets of life. As one passes through this stage, most of the time and efforts are consumed in running the race to obtain the material possessions, most of which is for ourselves! Responding to needs of others is many a times not a priority, sometimes even considered as a waste of time and resources.

As one goes beyond the youth stage, having spent the time and energy to obtain the worldly possessions, a realisation starts to set in as to what is the purpose of my life. This is where the words in Matthew 16:26 seems relevant, "*What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?*"

The Bible teaches us about the need to serve others. Matthew 25:40 reminds us, "*And the king will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did to me.'*"

The same is reiterated in Isaiah 58:10, "*If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.*"

It's important therefore, that one has a realisation and understanding early in ones lives about the purpose of their lives, as to how we can be of help and service to others. One needs to think as to how their education, job, resources, choices in life can be of service to the others and thereby for the glory of God.

Our God calls us to serve and be committed and He can strengthen us and can work miracles through us for the most needy and desolate people. In-line with the teachings of the Bible and for fulfilling the purpose and meaning of our lives, one should identify and work towards initiatives of serving the needy, volunteering for community development etc. It's not just identifying the need to serve, it is how deeply we should be committed to serve. About the level of commitment, *Colossians 3:23* says, *"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the lord and not for men."*

So as to build a purpose-driven and meaningful life, let us commit to serve, while we are still in our youth.

**-SIMON JOHN**



## ***Aabhari Trivia***

1. Where was Abraham from? Where did he die?
2. Whom did both Abraham and Isaac lie to at different times saying that their wives were their sisters?
3. Where did Lot run to before Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed? What was its old name?
4. What did the mysterious hand write on the wall in King Belshazzar's Banquet? What does it mean?
5. Which apostle said that Paul's teachings are difficult to understand? Give a Biblical reference.
6. How did John die? Where and when did this happen?
7. What did Reuben bring home for his mother Leah, which Rachel, in turn, asked from Leah in exchange for a night with Jacob? Give a Biblical reference.
8. This prophet's wife was a prostitute. Name the prophet.
9. Which country did Paul come from? Where did he die?

10. Whom did God direct to go and help Paul who had become blind?

## **THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS**

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it.” Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

As a child I’ve always found this part of the story a little puzzling. Why did God find the need to ask Moses to stretch out his staff? After all wasn’t he a strong, omnipotent God and couldn’t he part the waters by his mere will? It seems almost whimsical that God would need a thin piece of wood to tame the wild sea!

A few years later, I understood that it was very important to Moses that he was made to stretch out his staff though the act in itself wouldn’t have affected God’s power to alter the situation. God’s intention was to make him realise that he was part of a great change. He was made to realize that he had the power to make a difference. The staff was merely a tangible form of the power that Moses wielded. God made him an ‘agent of change.’

As a young adult, I find this realization very important. It is very disconcerting to see that as a community, we seem to have grown a penchant for shrugging our shoulders, waving our arms in the air in resignation and sighing, *“What can we do?”*

A lot. A lot is what we can do!

We often think that we lack what it takes to make a difference. Anything we do will be a mere ripple in a stormy ocean. When someone talks about changing an existing system/perception, it is conceived as a quixotic notion. We harbour the idea that any effort or change can be validated only if it is perceptible on a large scale or is revolutionary. We fail to acknowledge how small changes in our thinking can have deep effects in those around us and our progeny.

This is why as an individual I respect the concept of Sunday school. It is a community where an exchange of beliefs, faith and narratives is meant to contribute to the creation of free-thinking individuals; where the creation of thoughts is involved and understanding humans takes place; a creation of thinking, feeling adults.

Sunday school teachers shoulder the great responsibility of lending meaning to what may otherwise seem obsolete to students. This is by prodding the students to think, to develop opinions and become responsive to the world around them in the context of the Bible. In this, personal narratives play a great part.

*“Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with the shades of deeper meaning”*- Maya Angelou.

This is why discussions and deliberations between teachers and their students is important.

It is sad to see that our Sunday schools are slowly shifting to the paradigm of ‘schools’, (shifting to a mere emanation of knowledge), neglecting the essential concept of building up responsible

individuals of a community. Let's refocus on educating our Sunday school students about their role in their biosphere and the power they possess to act, rather than reinforce the notion that we are apart from society and anything that happens in it is beyond us and our control. After all, we are the society and anything we do, affects it greatly.

-CAROL DANIEL

## **SAMSON: JOURNEY TO HUMILITY**

The story of Samson begins like this.

### ***Judges 13;***

*3: The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, "You are barren and childless, but you are going to become pregnant and give birth to a son.*

*4: Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean.*

*5: You will become pregnant and have a son whose head is never to be touched by a razor because the boy is to be a Nazirite, dedicated to God from the womb.*

In this revelation, the angel of the Lord introduces us to the tradition of the Nazirites who took a vow of holiness to abstain from wine and grapes, to not cut their hair or beard, and to avoid contact with dead bodies. As Samson grew, the Lord blessed him abundantly with strength, knowledge, and wisdom.

### ***Judges 13;***

*25: "and the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him..."*

However, as he grew into manhood, Samson's lusts overpowered him. After a series of foolish mistakes and bad decisions, he fell in love with a woman named Delilah. His affair with this woman from the Valley of Sorek marked the beginning of his downfall and eventual demise. Philistine leaders schemed with Delilah to uncover the secret of Samson's great strength. Smitten with Delilah and infatuated with his own extraordinary talents, Samson walked right into the destructive plot.

### ***Judges 16;***

*17: So, he told her everything. "No razor has ever been used on my head," he said, "because I have been a Nazirite dedicated to God from my mother's womb. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man."*

*18: When Delilah saw that he had told her everything, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, "Come back once more; he has told me everything." So, the rulers of the Philistines returned with the silver in their hands.*

*19: After putting him to sleep on her lap, she called for someone to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. And his strength left him.*

Delilah wore Samson down with her persistent nagging and repeated requests, until he finally divulged the crucial information. Delilah shared this information to the Philistines who then



subdued Samson by shaving his hair off his head, humiliated him by gouging his eyes out and had him captured.

In ancient Greece, long hair was a status symbol of wealth, prosperity and power. Samson's long hair was never the source of his physical strength but merely a symbol of him abiding by the laws GOD had established. Delilah represents our emotions or earthly pleasures which deviate us from our spiritual minds. Our emotions play a strong role in our decision-making process but we were never meant to be ruled by our emotions. Our thoughts and emotions can blind us. Only by tapping into our intuition given to us by God, can we truly be guided out of our enslaved positions.

***Judges 16;***

*28: Then Samson prayed to the Lord, "Sovereign Lord, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes."*

***Do you think it's too late to ask God for help?***



At the end of his life, blinded, humbled, Samson finally realized his utter dependence upon God. He once was blind, but now could see. GOD's amazing grace. No matter how far you've fallen away from God, no matter how big you've failed, it's never too late to humble yourself and return to God. Ultimately, through his sacrificial death, Samson turned his miserable mistakes into victory. Let Samson's example persuade you — it's never too late to return to God's open arms. Only when we are able to destroy or overcome all the feelings and emotions which control us on a daily basis, will we be able to lead a peaceful and spiritual life.

***-JUBIN JOHN***

## **HE WILL DO IT**

As a youngster, it's only quite natural that there are so many things we will want and when we cannot achieve them in our own strength; we will want God to do it for us. As humans, God is our last resort. That is the way of the fallen world. But God did not create us to make Him a last resort; He wants us to make Him our first resort. He created us in His image so that we will have fellowship with Him/ commune with Him. He put in us a void which cannot be satisfied by any other cistern (read person, thing, pleasure) other than the living waters in Him. God alone can meet our deepest longings. Do not fool yourself into believing that family or relations, friends can fill in the void, which God alone, can do. God will do it for us on three conditions. What are they? Psalms 37: 5 says, "Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass." So, what does this verse say about how your plan shall be fulfilled?

*First, we must commit our way to the Lord.* This is a definite act of the will. We do not commit it to the Lord and then take it back, any more than a farmer plants his seed and then keeps digging it up to see if it's growing. Committing our way to the Lord is an act of faith, we make His way our way and our way His way.

*Second, we must trust God.* What does it mean to trust God? It means to believe His promises and to know that He is such a wonderful God that He can be trusted. Abraham's answer to his son's question - where is the sacrificial lamb - is a case in point. Abraham implicitly trusted the Lord, to provide the lamb for sacrifice. We trust people because their character is dependable, their track record is good. God's character and record is perfect.

*Third, we must wait on the Lord.* When will He act? In this age of quick - fixes, we have no patience to let God work out His plan. So, what do we do? We plot, plan and scheme and decide to help God to precipitate the matter. Again, Abraham comes to my mind. If he had not helped God by having Ishmael through Hagar, the bondwoman, Israel would not have had the problem of existence it faces from the Arab world, today. God's timing is the perfect time, neither late nor early. We have to develop the art of waiting on the Lord. Remember in His time He makes all things beautiful. Just learn to trust in the Lord, rest in Him with confidence that He has heard you and knows what you need and He will bring it to pass. He is working in you and on you while He is working for you. Commit, trust, and wait, and He will bring it to pass.

**-ANN MARY MATHEW**



## An Eye for Art



**RAY MATHEWS VERGHESE**



***RAY MATHEWS VERGHESE***



***NATASHA CHIRAYAN***

# SOLUTIONS

## Sudoku Solution

5	9	2	6	3	8	1	4	7
8	7	4	9	5	1	6	3	2
3	6	1	2	7	4	8	5	9
1	8	9	5	2	6	4	7	3
7	2	6	4	1	3	9	8	5
4	3	5	7	8	9	2	1	6
9	4	8	3	6	7	5	2	1
2	1	3	8	9	5	7	6	4
6	5	7	1	4	2	3	9	8

## Riddle answers

1. Towel
2. Footsteps
3. Breath

## Bible Quiz Answers:

1. Born in Ur-died in Hebron
2. Pharaoh
3. Zoar, Earlier known as Bela
4. Mene mene Tekel Uparsin-God had doomed the Kingdom of Belshazzar
5. Peter.Ref. II Peter Ch.3-V.16
6. Due to Old age at Ephesus in AD 98.
7. Mandrakes-Gen 30 V.14-16
8. Hosea ...Name of prostitute is Gomer.
9. Tarsus in Turkey-Died in Rome, Italy.
10. Ananias

## Bible Crossword

S	H	E	K	E	L		A	P	P	E	A	R	E	D
H	X		A		B		A		N		A		O	
E	P	H	E	S	I	A	N	S			C	U	B	I
A		O		T		K		S		H		B		I
R	A	R	E		M	E	D	I	T	A	T	I	O	N
E		T		N		R		O		N				G
R	A	I	S	I	N	S			N	A	T	H	A	N
S		N		N						E		S		P
	A	G	R	E	E	D			T	O	R	C	H	E
T						T		R		I		S		A
A	T	O	N	E	M	E	N	T	S		B	A	A	L
U		M		E		A		T		A		R		T
G	L	E	A	N		M	I	L	L	S	T	O	N	E
H		G		T		E		E		I		T		R
T	E	A	C	H	E	R	S			R	A	S	H	L

## Across:

- 1 Shekel, 4 Appeared,  
10 Ephesians, 11 Cubit, 12 Rare,  
13 Meditation, 15 Raisins, 16 Nathan,  
19 Agreed, 21 Torches, 23 Atonements,  
25 Baal, 27 Glean, 28 Millstone,  
29 Teachers, 30 Rashly.

## Down:

- 1 Shearers, 2 Exhorting, 3 East,  
5 Passion, 6 Enchanters, 7 Rabbi,  
8 Doting, 9 Bakers, 14 Nineteenth,  
17 Ashtaroth, 18 Psalter, 20 Dreamer, 21  
Tittle, 22 Taught, 24 Omega, 26 Asia





June	July	August	September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diocesan <b>Youth Camp</b></li> <li>• ENV Day</li> <li>• Blood donation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund-raising</li> <li>• <b>Talent night</b> with Senior Youth</li> <li>• Our Youth Camp</li> </ul>	New/Revamped <b>GYG Song Book</b> release with a fresh set of songs.	<b>Nandgaon Mission Camp</b> Weekend (2-days) to learn more about our Sabha evangelic activities
October	November	December	January
Planning/Arrangements for the <b>Ecumenical Youth Programme</b>	3-day <b>Ecumenical Youth Program</b> hosted at St. Peter's Mar Thoma Parish.  Music by Cherry and his team	<b>Christmas Tree</b> Presents for the poor people in slums nearby. <b>Carol singing</b> Goregaon Orphanage	<b>Spark</b>  Sports Day - with the Senior Youth Fellowship.

The months in the calendar are busier than they appear.  
Stay tuned.

#### AABHARI EDITORIAL TEAM

- |                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| • DIANA ROY                  | • JOEL SAMUEL          |
| • ROCHELLE SERA CHERIAN      | • RAY MATHEWS VERGHESE |
| • JULIAN SARA JOSEPH & Nancy |                        |

Ephesians 4: 13

*And so we shall all come together to that oneness in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God; we shall become mature people, reaching to the very height of Christ's full stature.*

The youth of St. Peter's Marthoma Church, Goregaon have the following Motto, Vision and Mission.

**Emulate. Enrich. Evolve.**

**Vision**

Our vision is to grow as a cohesive community who will always strive to measure up to God's standards

**Mission**

We will do this by emulating Christ in our lives, utilizing our talents, involving ourselves in learning, giving, teaching, healing, nurturing, and building communities. By pooling our talents, acting in unison, we will continue to grow in Christ with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.