

Lighthouse

Christmas 2022 | Issue 5 | Volume 1

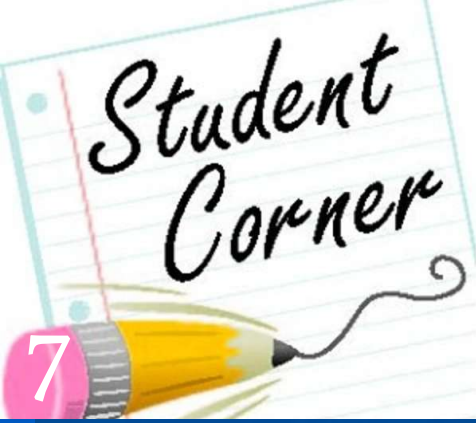


Wishing you a
**Merry
Christmas**

from HBI family

And let us not grow weary
of doing good,
for in due season we will reap
if we **Do not Give Up.**

-Galatians 6:9 (ESV)



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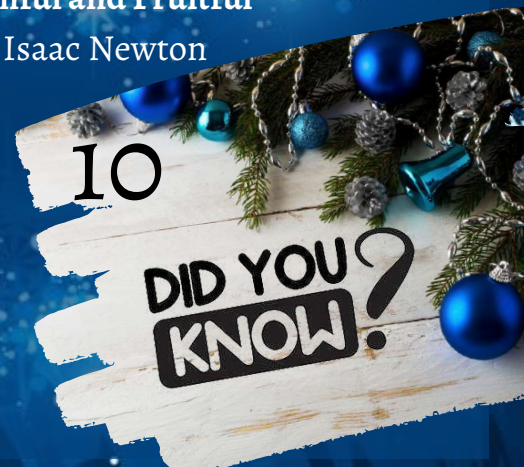
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Editor's Note

“You are More Precious than You can Imagine”

The theme that has been prayerfully chosen is “Don’t Give Up.” The theme is a caption taken from Romans 12:12 that requires us to rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, and be constant in prayer.

As the Christmas season approaches, we become aware of the decorations and festivities that begin to illuminate our surroundings and our lives. A celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus and Immanuel, "God with Us." I am compelled to take a moment to reflect on the enormity of the event. The sheer magnitude of God’s huge gift to mankind of His Son humbles me and gives me a sense of immense gratitude to Him.

I wish to share something that happened to me and my wife, which got me thinking about how much we are valued by God. A few years back, my wife and I were selling our home in Australia to move back to India. Of course, we valued our home at a certain price. However, it was the person who was buying our home and how much they were willing to pay for it that made the home what it was worth. Now God is willing to pay for you and me with the very life of His only begotten Son – a huge price.

Dearly beloved in Christ, let us realize this formidable passion and love that was willing to be human like us, endure humility, and in obedience, take on the punishment for us so that we may be reconciled to God. This year, let us celebrate this miracle that changed “God with Us” to “God in Us” and claim being co-heirs with Him in His kingdom.

In summary, whatever we are going through, we must always remember that God knows us and how much we can bear. My prayer for each of you is that you experience God in a special manner this Christmas. Let our attitude be one of humbleness, repentance, and worship, knowing how awesome our God is and who we are in Him.

Take heart..... **“He who is in you is far greater than he who is in the world.”**

God bless you, and may this edition be of great encouragement to you!

Don't Give Up!

-Mr. Dev Daniel
Editor-in-Chief
Lighthouse e-Magazine



The Christmas SAD

Dr. Judith Orloff, in his book, *“Thriving as an Empath,”* specifically states that,

Forced happiness makes us feel more sad, upset, and lonely because we are faking our feelings.

Christmas is usually viewed as a time of rejoicing, joy, and happiness as we meet with family and friends to celebrate the festive spirit. However, for some people, it can be a period of painful reflection, sadness, loneliness, anxiety, and depression. Even individuals who like Christmas can experience depression during this busy season. Christmas is often a time of tremendous emotion and demands, which can leave many people feeling overextended and exhausted. People may be even more prone to experiencing **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**. SAD is a form of major depressive disorder that occurs in seasonal patterns that are prevalent among Christians with temporary feelings of sadness, loneliness, depression, lack of motivation, tension, frustration, a sense of loss, and anxiety in and around the Christmas season.

There is shopping, special events, and expectations of a good time as a part of the celebration.

Occasionally, these pressures can be stressful. We may also miss loved ones or have negative feelings from past memories, especially during the post-COVID phase, which will eventually lead to forgetting about good nutrition and participating in physical activity. Their symptoms are unlikely to be as severe as those of depression, and they can typically be addressed by seeking help. Depression, on the other hand, may lead to destructive behaviors such as increased drug and alcohol use, promiscuity, gambling, and emotions of hopelessness.

There are numerous reasons to make someone feel sad during the Christmas season. Happiness is broken due to the absence of the important ones in the family and being unable to contact them now. Relationship break-ups and health problems are the factors that take away the celebration mood.



Mr. John Cerilo



Also, some people want to avoid their family or friends due to abuse and traumatic experiences, resulting in a difficult relationship with family members and co-workers. Most mental health issues arise from society or the outside world and its demands.

The Christian societal elements, such as the media, advertisements, and representations of Christmas, carry disturbing, difficult-to-avoid pressure to enjoy and appear happy, as well as various feelings about the Christmas experience. The most well-known practical worries revolve around not having sufficient money or being in debt. Additional financial pressures to buy gifts, outfits, and food appear to be difficult factors in re-engaging in a sad mood. Christmas would become an even more stressful and upsetting time for those who had to spend time in the hospital.



Having discussed the above, ***this Christmas invites us to look at it with a different tone to get through Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)***. Christmas is the perfect time to take time to be grateful for what you have in life, whether it's your health, where you live, or the food on your table. It also helps you overcome anxiety when you learn to pay attention to the gift of life from God. Everybody can choose to feel lonely because they are alone, and at the same time, we can appreciate the positive things in life. We can reframe negative thoughts, which is the foundation of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT). There is no need to suffer alone at this time of Christmas.

Let's try to make contact with others in our community whom we know or who are likely to be lonely. If you feel more strongly about missing someone you love at Christmas, it's okay to be sad, but give yourself the chance to do something fun that will lift your spirits. We can embrace Christmas Day for what it is, not as a reflection of our life. Because Christmas is just one day. It is not, in any sense, a reward or a punishment. It is not appropriate to evaluate our relationships with our parents, spouses, children, other family members, friends, and others during the Christmas season. Let's take a moment to consider our neighbors and others who may be living alone in distant areas and call them to see how they're doing and wish them a happy Christmas. We shouldn't just presume they are okay and are being taken care of somewhere.

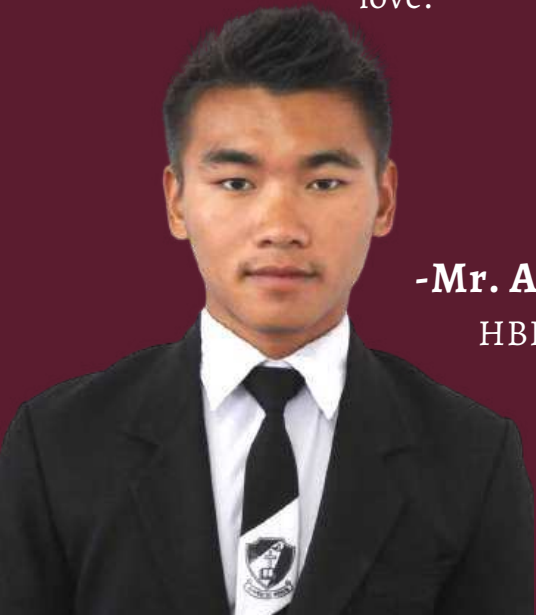
Instead of taking things too seriously, let's remember that *this Christmas season is all about spending time and showing love to our friends, family, and community*. We shouldn't be afraid to say "NO". We too have limitations as humans. If we don't want to, we don't have to fit Christmas Day into our itinerary. This also includes being prepared to say no to spending money if you're going over budget. We should keep in mind that Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is temporary, so it's okay if we feel like we're going through it.

“ Let's seek out the support we require and keep going; for everything we need will come to us at God's perfect time. ”



The love of God

Lo! I came to this world,
With nothing more but the love of God;
And lo! comes knowledge of evil
Which is pleasing and satisfying.
Thee, I gave myself to the doom maker;
Took things into my own hands,
Doing that is pleasing.
God himself makes known of Him,
Took me in by the hands;
Making and shaping anew me:
In the designs not known to man.
Complains that it's beyond me
Yet He knew of me and took me deeper,
In His love was I drowned.
Beautiful and meaningful everything began
in Life;
Oh! How great is thy love for me-
Beyond reach it is for me to proclaim of His
love.



-Mr. Aku D. Roger
HBI & College

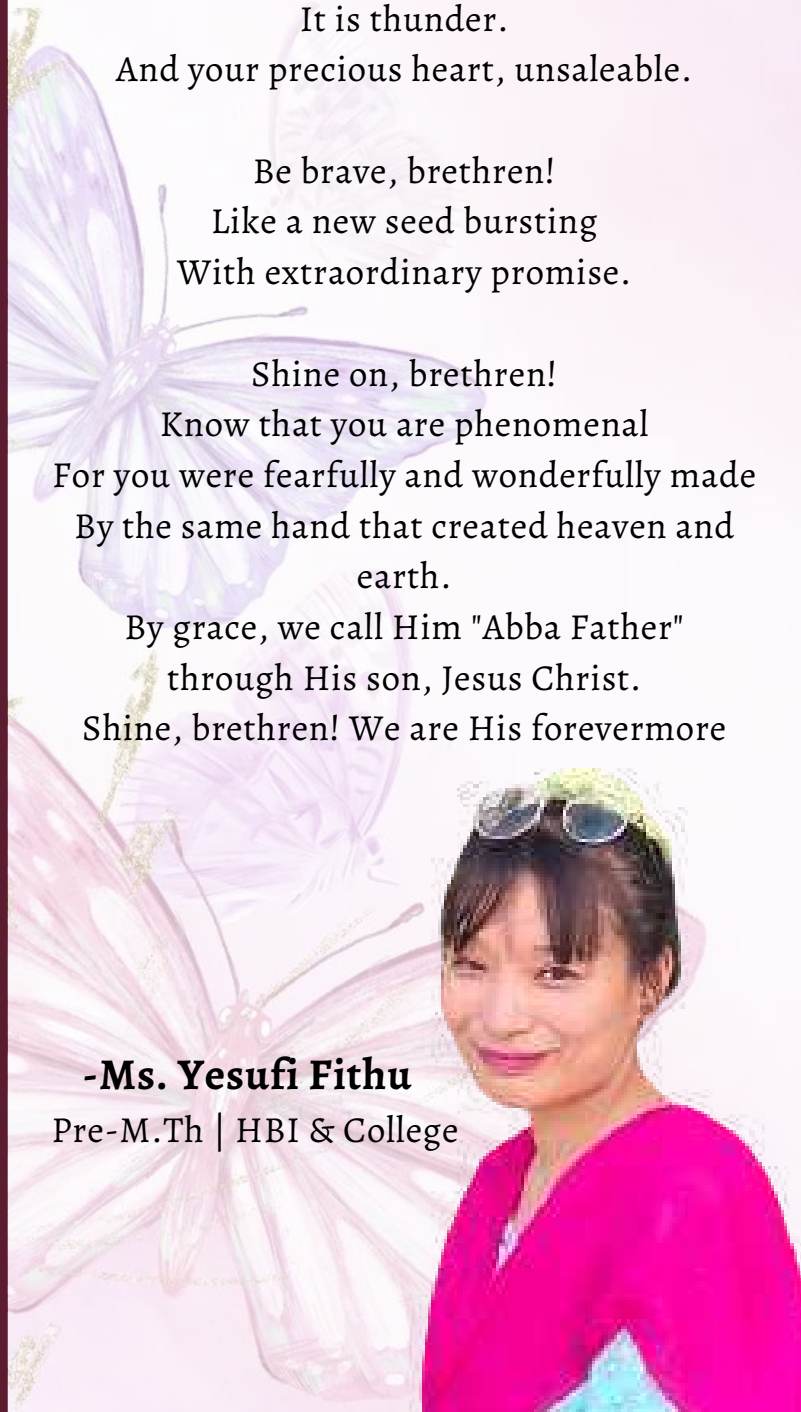
Majestic

Rise, brethren!
Into the wonder of daybreak.
Be a rainbow in the cloud.
Be a free bird on the back of the night wind.

Shine on, brethren!
Walk with joy in your golden feet
Over crystal seas
And purple mountains.
Know that your beauty
It is thunder.
And your precious heart, unsaleable.

Be brave, brethren!
Like a new seed bursting
With extraordinary promise.

Shine on, brethren!
Know that you are phenomenal
For you were fearfully and wonderfully made
By the same hand that created heaven and
earth.
By grace, we call Him "Abba Father"
through His son, Jesus Christ.
Shine, brethren! We are His forevermore



-Ms. Yesufi Fithu
Pre-M.Th | HBI & College

THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

There are individuals of several faiths in this world, and every faith has a founder whose birthday is grandly celebrated every year. Christians believe that because God loves the world so much, He sent His only son, Jesus Christ, to live among us as a human and atone for the world's sins. Throughout many countries, Christmas is the most awaited season of the year. Although the Bible does not mention a precise day for Jesus' birth, a day has been allotted to remember it. Jesus gave His life as a ransom for us, conquered death, and is now alive. Emmanuel means God is with us. He is not a myth or a character from a story but He is alive and with us.

When we call to Him, He answers us; when we knock, He will open' when we search for Him earnestly, we will find him; when we need help, He comes to our rescue. That is our Lord's love for us! He is the true living God!

Around 700 years ago, the prophets of the Old Testament foretold the birth of Jesus. They prophesied the exact -

- Place of birth - Micah 5:2
- The way He will be born - Isaiah 7:14
- With what kind of cloth, will He be wrapped in - Luke 2:7
- A sign of Jesus' birth is the star in the sky - Numbers 24:17

Goutam Buddha, a great man and the founder of Buddhism, had prophesied that 500 years from now, in the center of this world, a savior of this world would be born. Geographically, Israel is at the center of the world. How amazing it is to see that prophecies are indeed real. Jesus does not belong to just one community or country. He came to save humanity as a whole. Jesus became the sacrifice, the ransom to save us from our sins and reconcile the relationship with God that was broken in the garden of Eden when sin entered this world through Adam and Eve.

So, why did Jesus take the form of a human and come into this world? Here is a brief thought on it.

“

77. To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,
78. Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day springs from on high hath visited us,
79. To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

- Luke 1: 77-79 (KJV)

”

1) To Guide Us into the Way of Peace

When people wept and prayed to God for Him to show them the way to give light and life, God heard them and sent Jesus and who are the way, the truth, and the life. The way means living a life that pleases God alone. There are two ways set before us: the narrow way and the wide way.

- The narrow way leads us to God. It means living according to God's will and purpose.
- The wide way leads us to Hell. It means living according to our wishes, enjoying worldly pleasures, and committing crimes like rape, murder, and corruption.

Jesus's life portrays how we should walk in God. Jesus did whatever God told Him to do. He showed the way of peace. We can read in Matthew 5:39 (KJV),

39. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

If we say we are true Christians, we must learn to walk in the ways that Jesus showed us in peaceful harmony with our fellow human beings. We must restrain ourselves from arguments, fights, jealousy, and murder, even if the other person slaps us, cheats us, or hurts us in any way, because all these are displeasing to God.

We must choose to walk in a way that pleases God. That is the way to eternal life. When we commit our ways to God, He will direct our path and lead us to our destined purpose for which we are created.

2) To Bring Light to Those Who Live in Darkness

God sent His only son to lead us back to God. The line "OM SRI BRAHMA PUTRAYA NAMAHA" can be read in Indian Vedas. OM which means sound, repentance, remorse, and regret they proclaim OM KARAN which the OM will be taking the form of a person, and that OM is who has taken the form of Omkarananda. Nanda means God. The same is written in our Bible too,

1. In the beginning, was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

- John 1:1, 14 (KJV)

OM took form but Word came in flesh. Asatoma Sad-Gamaya Tamaso Maa Jyotir-Gamaya Mrytyor-Maa Amritam Gamaya means "Lead me from the untruth to the truth, lead me from darkness to light, Lead me from death to immortality".

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

-John 8:12 (KJV)

Jesus is the light of the world and if we follow him and walk in His ways, we shall have the light of life.

Through Him we learn to walk in God's way of peace. This is the hope we humans have through Christmas.




Wishing you a



Merry Christmas and a

Happy New Year

Christmas - Seven Highlights about Jesus' Birth

- 
- **The Supernatural Birth of Jesus** – Born of a virgin
 - **The Life of Jesus** – He lived a righteous life on this earth and showed us the way to life that pleases God
 - **Jesus was a Great Orator** – No one has taught like how Jesus did
 - **Miracle Worker** – No one performed miracles like Jesus. He turned the water into wine at the Canaan wedding. He healed the lame, the blind and people who were possessed by demons. He brought dead people back to life. He prayed and blessed the 5 loaves and 2 fishes and it multiplied to fill all the five thousand men along with their wives and children.
 - **The Sacrifice that Jesus Made** – No one in the history has chosen death to save humans. Jesus took up our sins and hung on the cross, shedding all his blood to ransom us. He became the sacrificial lamb to redeem us and reconcile us back to God.
 - **The Great Conqueror of Death** – Jesus conquered death by rising up the third day.
 - **He will Come Again** – The Lord has promised us that He will come again into this world. This time, not as a human but as a conqueror to take us back with Him.

POEM ABOUT FAME AND DEATH

"No Wonder Coffins are Full with Nothing"

To all legends and laymen,
Death spares not, the legacy is known
through ages,
Perfection in all its glory and fame, to what
end,
No wonder coffins are full of nothing.
The dead ones speak to nobody,
To the world, mighty and victorious,
Bare hands to the realm of the dead.



-Mr. Darling Samuel
HBI & College

Death & Life

Did You Know?

Christmas Ornaments

What Do They Symbolize?

Christmas Tree – Pine trees are evergreen and represent the endless love of Christ.

Star – It represents the Star of Bethlehem guiding the three wise men and is a heavenly sign of prophecy being fulfilled and a shining hope for humanity.

Wreaths – Represents eternal love, immortality, generosity, giving, and cedar of strength.

Candy Canes – They represent Shepherd's staff and the red stripes represent the blood, the sacrifice of Christ, and white represents His purity.

Red Colour – Red represents the blood of Jesus that was shed for us on the cross.

Green Colour – Green represents eternal life through Christ.

Bells – Bells are used as instruments to announce the birth of Jesus. They also mean that we were once the lost sheep and Christ found us.

Bible Word Scramble

- 1) lbaoromehwt
- 2) udsedath
- 3) raachzaih
- 4) oyj ot eth ldoorw
- 5) yemrr siahmtrasc
- 6) og etll ti no eth onnmitau
- 7) rilngoac
- 8) eudtermooyrn
- 9) hobaaaid
- 10) Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them (DYIGTNLLIE) what time the star appeared.

Send your answers to lighthousebi@gmail.com | hbiemagazine@gmail.com

September Issue - Winners



Mr. Victor Kumar
Bible Crossword



Mrs. Princy
Bible Quiz



Mr. Ravi Kumar
Bible Quiz

Bible Quiz

Participants can register by
visiting: joinmyquiz.com

Enter this code:

4073 2491

**December 16, 2022: Deadline to
complete the quiz**





Great Things Take Time

-Mrs. Princy Kiruba

Greetings!!

Once an elephant and a dog became pregnant at the same time. Three months later, the dog gave birth to six puppies. Six months later, the dog was pregnant again, and nine months later, it gave birth to another dozen puppies. The pattern continued.

On the eighteenth month, the dog approached the elephant, questioning, *"Are you sure that you are pregnant? We became pregnant on the same date, I have given birth three times to a dozen puppies and they are now grown to become big dogs, yet you are still pregnant. What's going on?"*. The elephant replied, *"There is something I want you to understand. What I am carrying is not a puppy, but an elephant. I only give birth to one in every two years. When my baby hits the ground, the earth feels it. When my baby crosses the road, human beings stop and watch in admiration. What I carry draws attention. So what I'm carrying is mighty and great."*

It is a great story with a powerful lesson. *Yes, there is a mighty reward in waiting for great things to happen in your life.* The people around you may question it. Don't worry, just boldly say that great things may take time. Because God will never put you down. Let's see why God allowed the time delays in your life.

• Equipping Time

In Genesis 39, Joseph was sent to Potiphar's house in Egypt. He was betrayed by his own brothers, away from his parents, but God was with him. Potiphar saw the uniqueness in Joseph, and he appointed Joseph as the overseer of this household. Before, he was just a little boy under his father's protection, but now God gives him the knowledge to take care of the work given to him because God knew that one day Joseph has to oversee the whole of Egypt. That was the time in Joseph's life to equip his qualities. Likewise, **God knows your future, so in the meantime, God will equip you and make you handle the blessings that are on your way.**

• Edifying Time

Edifying time is the most crucial time in your life because that is the **time God may remove or add some things in your life, or you can say it as a testing period.** God knows what will help you to be great, so He will direct your steps. He will be with you to help you.

"Don't be anxious about the waiting period in your life. Because everything that God allows in your life is for good."

In Joseph's life, he faced a tough situation from Potiphar's wife, but he endured what is good before God. Here God tested him, but he shone in it.

Earlier, Joseph was sent to Egypt, but this time he ended up in jail. But God was with him. So whenever the situation becomes very tough, just remember that the waiting is getting over.

Isaiah 40:31 says, *"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,"* so just lean on God and He will give you the strength to go through it. Gold is proven to be pure only when it can withstand fire. So, this is the time God is going to shine on you like gold.

Dear friend, you may be worried about the delay in receiving the blessings that you are expecting. But remember, the delay in your life is the time that God is using to edify and equip you for a greater blessing. **Don't worry about the present situation. Continue to pray and lean on God. The greater and mighty are on your way.**

Lighting of Kuthu Vizhaku by our College Girls



Praise and Worship by Mr. Poujik (Faculty) and his team

Graduation Service

Proclaiming His Glory Participating in His Story

27th August 2022



Rt. Rev. Dr. Paul R. Gupta
Master of Ceremony
President & Chairman | HBI & College



Mrs. Malini Asirvatham
HBI Annual Report
Executive Vice President | HBI & College



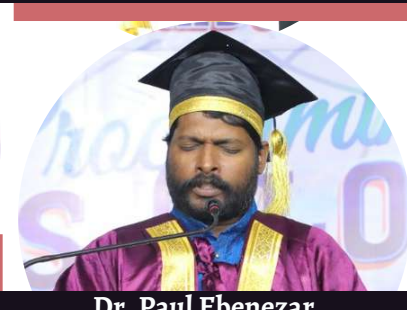
Ms. Lum Gangmei
Special Song



Mr. Johnson Rajendran
Principal's Report
Vice Principal & Academic Dean



Mr. Thwang Ceu Hinn
Testimony
Ph.D. New Testament



Dr. Paul Ebenezar
Offertory Prayer
Dean Doctoral Studies



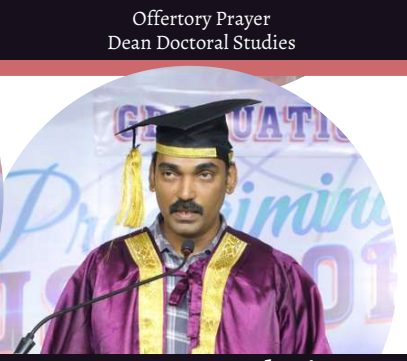
Mr. John Peter
MTI Trainer



Prof. Rev. Dr. Johnson Thomaskutty
Graduation Address



Mrs. Jian Gangmei
Registrar



Rev. Greeto Racharia
Scripture Reading
Dean Professional Studies



Releasing of the Souvenir by Mr. Jaganathan Susai | Principal Online College



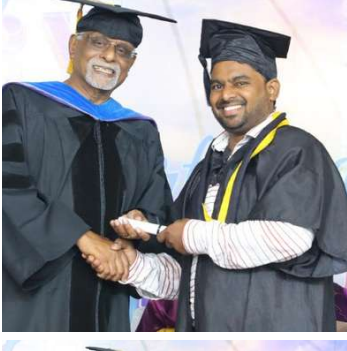
Graduation Ceremony






MTI | B.Th | MACS | MABS | PG Diploma | M.Th | D.Min |
Ph.D in NT | Doctor of Divinity (Honoris Causa)



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@awesomedesigns2k16   

SHINE LIKE A

Star

HARD TO TOUCH

@awesomedesigns

Princy Kumbha

King Hezekiah

Name: Hezekiah
Also Known as: Hizqiyahu
 Ben Ahaz
Father: Ahaz
Mother: Abijah
Spouse: Hephzibah
Children: Manasseh of Judah
Born Country: Israel
Died at Age: 52 in 687 BC

His Life

Hezekiah was the thirteenth ruler of Israel's divided southern kingdom. At the age of 25, he ascended to the throne and ruled Judah from 715 to 686 BC. Assyria invaded Israel in his sixth year as king, gained control of the northern kingdom, and exiled the people. This was God's punishment for the Israelites' rebellious behaviour and lack of sincere repentance.

One of Judah's most upright kings, Hezekiah preserved and purified the true worship of the Lord. Hezekiah was a **wonderful man of prayer**, and we can learn something about how to pray to the true and living God from the way Hezekiah did.

Thus, Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he did what was good and right and faithful before the Lord his God.

– 2 Chronicles 31: 20

General Rabshakeh, who led the Assyrian invasion of Jerusalem in 701 BC, mocked God by equating Him to the weak gods of the conquered regions. Hezekiah grieved over this and sent a message to prophet Isaiah, and the Lord, through Isaiah, gave him the assurance that he would be protected from his enemies and that Jerusalem would not be invaded.

Prayer of Hezekiah

When Sennacherib threatened King Hezekiah, he turned to prophet Isaiah for advice. In **2 Kings 19: 6,7** it is revealed that God gave Isaiah the assurance that Sennacherib would hear a rumour, return home, and perish by the sword of his own land.

The Assyrian messengers then deliver a letter to Hezekiah. He went to the house of God, laid down the letter before the Almighty, and then fervently prayed. Hezekiah asked for all the Israel kingdoms to be delivered so that these people could come to know the true, living God. **His prayer is a powerful demonstration of his faithfulness.**

We can see that God answered through Isaiah that Assyria would never conquer Jerusalem and we can read about it in **2 Kings 19: 32–34**. **In a single night, the angel of God struck 185,000 Assyrians in their camp.** Sennacherib and a small few other people went back to their homeland, and as prophesied by Isaiah, Sennacherib was killed by his sons in his own land.



When King Hezekiah became ill and was on his deathbed, prophet Isaiah prophesied about his death. Turning away from him and falling the wall, Hezekiah sobbed vehemently and begged the Lord to recall his loyalty to Him. Isaiah was instantly spoken by God, that God had heard his cries and prayers and would soon heal him. **God extended King Hezekiah's life by 15 years.**

Lessons from Hezekiah's Life

- 1) Hezekiah put his hope in the one and only living and true God.
 - 2) He fervently prayed to God for deliverance whenever he confronted difficulties or danger.
 - 3) He put his complete trust in God.
-
-



THIS CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the most awaited time of the year. Churches, streets, and homes are all decorated with lights, Christmas trees, and colorful hangings. Children are excited to receive gifts from Santa. The question is, **Is Jesus in our celebration?**

Becky Kelly was inspired by an incident, and she wrote a song about it. Here is the true story behind the song "**Where's the line to see Jesus?**"

When Kelly and her four-year-old nephew went to a mall for Christmas shopping, the little boy saw a huge crowd of people everywhere, busily shopping. He also saw children standing in long lines to receive gifts from Santa and take photos with him. This little boy innocently asked Kelly,

“Where's the line to see Jesus? If it's His birthday, why are we not seeing Him more?”

This question touched her heart and she wrote a song named "Where's the line to see Jesus?"

Just like the little boy questioned, **if we say Christmas is a reminder of the birth of Jesus, why do people don't see Jesus?**

We are so busy planning and making lists of what to buy and to whom to send gifts and cards that we forget the Lord. **Christmas is about celebrating Christ and thanking Him for the sacrifice He made on the cross to reconcile us to God.** The greatest commandment is to love one another as He has loved us.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

- John 15: 12 ”

We all have to stand in line in front of God on the day of judgment. Matthew 24 and 25 talk about the end times and judgment. In verse 31, we can read that the ones who feed the hungry, clothe the poor, and visit the sick and downtrodden are the ones welcomed to inherit the kingdom of God.

This Christmas, let's focus more on celebrating Jesus. How will people see Jesus? **We are ambassadors of God's love.** Sharing God's love with the poor and downtrodden is the best way to show Jesus. So, let's make a choice this Christmas to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the downtrodden. **Sharing God's love is showing Jesus to the world.**

Is Santa Claus Real?

The most exciting part of Christmas for children around the world is unwrapping presents left under the Christmas tree by Santa Claus. Santa Claus is said to live at the North Pole and travel the world during the Christmas season on a sleigh pulled by nine flying reindeer. Is Santa Claus real?

The name "Santa Claus" is the English translation of the Dutch name "St. Nicholas Sinterklaas". After many years of praying, a wealthy family gave birth to St. Nicholas, but his parents passed away when he was a little child as a result of a pandemic plague. St. Nicolas received a huge inheritance. He became a Bishop and he helped the underprivileged in numerous ways since he had a generous and kind heart. The Dutch believed that the legendary Santa Claus entered through the chimney to leave gifts for the children.

He passed away on December 6th, and since then December 6th is celebrated as Feast Day, and feasts are given to the poor and downtrodden. The Dutch settlers brought this tradition to America, and it is now a traditional Christmas event every year. The mid-20th Century Coca Cola Ad campaign made Sinterklaas from a saintly bishop to a white-bearded, red-capped Santa Claus.

Not a lot of documentation exists regarding Sinterklaas. The bones of St. Nicolas, which are missing a pelvic bone, are believed to be kept in Bari, Italy. In 2017, a pelvic bone that dated to the 4th century was discovered and its attributes to St. Nicolas.

St. Nicolas may be real, but is Santa Claus real considering all these legends and archaeological proof? The answer depends on what you believe!

What is Christmas All About?



-Mrs. Diana Joel

*What is Christmas all about? It is all about
God's love for you.*



Do you find this claim weird? Do you say, "What have I got to do with Christmas?"

Christmas is all about God's love for you. You are valuable because you were created by God in his own image and that He has a unique purpose for you.

Most of the time, because of so many challenges, problems, and pain, we see that life doesn't seem so great and meaningful. The life which was intended to be purposeful lost its purpose because of sin. Sin is disobeying God. Man disobeyed God as he misused the freewill that God gave him out of love.

There is a consequence for sin. We, who was created in the image of God, lost that image due to sin. Sin became the root cause of all of man's suffering, pain, and the chaos we see in this world.

So, was God merely a spectator when we sinned and were left to face its consequences all by ourselves? What is God doing when this world is suffering?

In many ways, God could have dealt with sin. God is not indebted to do anything to save man from sin, He is Almighty and the sufferings of this world cannot affect Him in any way.

God has all the might and the right to do or not do anything. When God created man He warned him of the consequences of sin and so, man cannot question God about why He is silent without interfering in his sufferings.



There is no compulsion on God to act on man's behalf. By destroying the sinful humans God could have gotten rid of all the evil and suffering in this world.

It is us who forfeited the gift of life by disobeying God and bringing this evil and suffering upon ourselves. That is what is expected from a holy and just God.

We are not amazed or startled when an honest judge executes the guilty with the right punishment.

We do not give the same privilege to God. It is not at all amazing when a just God chooses to get rid of the evil and injustice in this world. He has all the right and the power to do so. Yet, God did not choose to do so as it would involve executing you and me. Some of us may expect God to just forgive man and give him back the privileges that he lost due to sin, simply without doing anything.

A worldly judge may free a guilty man without punishing him, and he will not be considered a righteous judge because justice is not being served. God is just, and He will not let sin go unpunished.

So, what did God do? How did He handle the consequences of our sins? God did not turn away from us or our sufferings.

He did not stay high and aloof and just dictate terms and conditions to get rid of our sufferings. God chose to become a man. And, that is the amazing message of Christmas.

Let's see in what ways it is amazing and in what ways it is connected to us. He chose to enter this world as He volunteered Himself to be in your shoes. Though He faced the same temptations that you and I faced, He did not sin.

Jesus, the exact imprint of the unseen God, did not lose His image as we did by succumbing to temptations. Therefore, His life became the reference for us to imitate and to get back the image that we lost.

Our punishment for sin is not dealt with yet. It is amazing and unimaginable that God would give up His privileges to enter this world. The incredibleness of God lowering Himself to serve other human beings and accepting the slander and abuse of other men without punishing them is astounding.

God is love. Where there is love, there is mercy and forgiveness. He shows mercy on us by not giving us the punishment we deserve. As the righteous judge, he bore the punishment for our sins. He died in our place sacrificing Himself for us, thus forgiving us.

What's even more astounding is that He lowered Himself unto death on the cross, the worst of all the punishments that humans have ever invented.

His death on the cross not only dealt with the consequence of sin, it also empowers us to overcome sin and to imitate Him, by which we ultimately get the image of Christ, which is absolutely undeserving for us.

And that's what grace means, getting what we do not deserve. The cross of Calvary is the place where the LOVE, MERCY, JUSTICE and GRACE of God are revealed. When He was on the cross, we were on His mind. We would not be celebrating the birth of Christ if the death of Christ on the cross was the end of the story. He rose up again on the third day, defeating death.

Why did God do this for us? Because we were created for eternity. The gift of life which God has given us is not temporal but eternal. Our life is not limited to this world and it does not end with death.


There is life after death, and that life is for eternity.

If our sins are not dealt with here in this world, then we will face the consequences of sin for eternity, that is, eternal death.

If God had not died in our place for our sins, we would be facing eternal damnation. There would not be any hope for the future. But Jesus gives back the gift of life to anyone who believes in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

God's love for us was revealed through Christ. Because Jesus came into this world to save us and died on the cross for our sins, we can have life, abundant life, for eternity.

That's What Christmas is All About!



*And that's what
grace means,
getting what we
do not deserve.*



FAITHFUL AND FRUITFUL

God's Grace for Us

-Mr. Isaac Newton

Some of us maybe carrying burdens, feel lonely in relationship or hope for a better one. Some may wonder how to continue life while facing challenges and you are burnout and in a state of mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical tiredness. You may be filled with anxiety and uncertainty about your future. Maybe you are a person excited about what God is doing in your ministry.

If you are doing this on your own, what will help you feel safe and be honest with God? Is there a time and place you can set aside to do so?

Together, Let's explore God's grace for those serving Him. This series will help you and your church members to,

- celebrate God's grace together
- rest in God's grace
- renew your calling
- work together and
- take practical steps toward the goal

1) The Cycle of Grace

The life of Jesus is the basis for the Cycle of Grace. The Cycle of Grace begins with acceptance, and requires sustenance, and leads to a life of significance and fruitfulness. We can receive acceptance and sustenance only through God. We must receive them from God before we can give.

2) What is Grace?

Read Ephesians 2:6-9 and try answering these questions:

1. How is God's grace described in this passage?
2. How would you define grace in your own words?
3. What would be the opposite of grace?

3) Accepting Grace for Salvation is the Beginning

Grace is a free gift from God. God favours us bestows us with specific gifts like salvation, rest, peace, provision and by adopting us into His family we live and serve Him by His grace. We cannot measure or earn it. It is the power of God which that strengthens us to live and rest in Him.

“

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

-Titus 2: 11-12

”

4) Read Titus 2:11-12 and try answering these:

1. What does grace teach us in these passages?
2. Which parts of our lives are by grace?

5) Grace for Ministry

Many people understand grace as salvation. But many do not understand grace for ministry. God's attitude toward us never changes. Each day God showers us with His unconditional love. This love never changes.

6) Planting Seeds of Practice

After every session, we will put our learning into practice. Before the next session, find a time to be with God in a quiet place. If you are doing this individually, ask someone to pray for you.

During your time with God:

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. Personalize this verse. Add your name and your weaknesses. Ask God, what does he want you to know?



Let's ponder:

- Summarize what you learned about grace.
- What are words that describe our relationship with the God of grace?
- Which words describe a relationship with a god who you have to earn their favor?
- Together, give praise to God for his grace.



Rooted in the Gospel

In Christ, God's love for you will never change. God's grace to us in Christ is a firm anchor for the soul, in our weaknesses, struggles, weariness, thanksgiving, and joy. Hebrews 6:19-20

Blessing

May God bless you with a rich experience of his grace. May your hearts be strengthened in grace, and may you grow in grace.

Prayer Helplines

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Have A Prayer Request? Call Us

We would like to pray for you



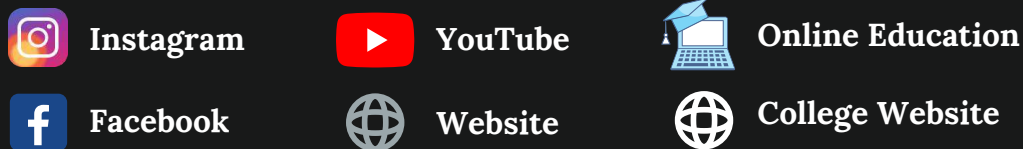
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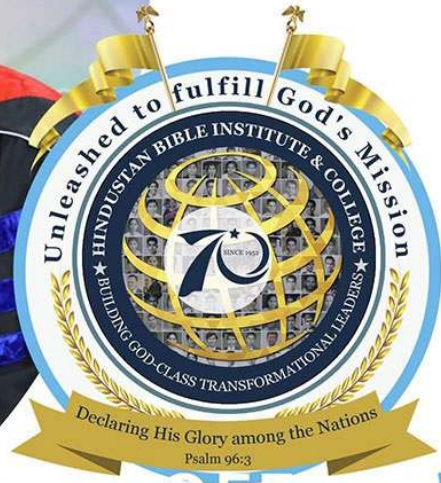
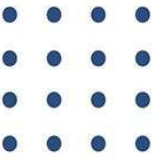


To be a guiding light to direct people to run their race with perseverance without being wavered by the storms or broken by dangerous perilous rocks.

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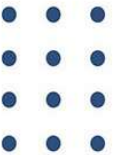
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