

# GRACE & PEACE

An E-periodical For spiritual enlightenment, edification and encouragement.



## A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THE RIGHTS OF THE MIGHTY



A Tribute:



Easow Josifus (1940–2022)

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# A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THE RIGHTS OF THE MIGHTY

 By Nelson Thomas

The ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia once again brings before us a fundamental human weakness; the mighty and powerful consider that it's their right to have their way at any cost and the weak and vulnerable must be at the mercy of the strong!

Not only in such geopolitical affairs, even among small communities and individuals we can notice such superiority complex displayed arrogantly and violently. When one considers themselves as the 'fittest' due to any reason, then they feel that their intentions must be accomplished. They have people to make it happen, often subjugating

and silencing the weaker ones. The poor feel that they are helpless and must be submissive to the powerful.

'Survival of the fittest' could be the law of the animal kingdom but if the so-called modern, educated society follows the same principle unashamedly and unchallenged what is the difference between man and animal? Is it not a big blow to the basic principles of humanity and natural justice? What should be a Christian response to this issue? What does the scripture say to the 'fittest' as well as to the 'weakest'? How can the strong and weak coexist with mutual respect and care?



## The Cause and Consequences

As in all others troubles plaguing mankind, the haughtiness of man also stems from his sinfulness. Ever since the fall of man the peace and harmony of the Garden of Eden became foreign to him. Violence and bloodshed became part his daily life. (Rom 1:28ff; Gen 4:8)

Selfish ambitions make one thirsty for achievements in every area. That passion for success emboldens them to take any path to accomplish it. By hook or crook they succeed and yet their greed is never satisfied. In their pursuit to reach the uppermost, they do not mind the consequences like pain, agony and the loss of their fellow beings.

However, God's eyes are upon the sufferings of the oppressed. He cannot be indifferent to the afflictions of the poor and needy. The Lord told Moses, "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows." (Exo 3: 7) Not only the Lord delivers the distressed people in a miraculous manner, but He will also destroy all the oppressors in His own way.

We have plenty of examples in the Bible, how hard-hearted autocrats tried to subjugate the weak and defenceless. They may succeed for some time, but ultimately they would be doomed and disappeared. God's dealings with Pharaoh, Sennacherib the Assyrian King, Nebuchadnezzar, etc., must be lessons to the tyrants in whichever arena they may be. (Exo 1: 8ff; 15: 4; 2Chro 32:21; Dan 4:33)

## Divine Displeasure

God always resists the proud and haughty. Whether their arrogance is expressed in words, deeds or even looks, God hates it and responds accordingly. (Pro 21:4; Isaiah 3:16; 10:12; James 4:6) We have plenty of scripture passages where the Lord speaks against the proud tyrants. "Behold, I am against you, O most haughty one!" says the Lord GOD of hosts; "For your day has come, The time that I will punish you." (Jer 50: 31ff; cf. Ezek 29:3; 38:3; Nah 2:13, etc.)

Even the associates of the tormenters will not be spared. (Job 9:13; Isa 30:7) Many may think it's prudent to stay neutral in order to guard their self-interest. However, they cannot get away from their moral responsibility. (Rom 1:32) Never forget, sin involves not just our actions but even our inactions. Deliberately avoiding the right action is tantamount to an evil act! (James 4:17)

At the same time, the humble will always find favour with the Lord and they will experience salvation and exaltation in due time. (Psa 18:27; 20:8; 138:6) When pride brings one to the lowest level, and even destruction, humility takes one to the highest. (Pro 16:18) The proud will lose their respect, but the humble will earn it. (Pro 29:23; Isa 57: 15; Matt 18:4)

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*“You can have no greater sign of a confirmed pride than when you think you are humble enough.”*

--- William Law

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## Exhortations

That's why Jeremiah the prophet admonishes, "Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD." (Jere 9:23, 24)

Apostle Paul also wrote to Timothy, "Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy." (1Timo 6:17)

It is utter foolishness to boast on anything, like our health, wealth or any other achievement. All that we consider as our might and sure support are God's gracious provision only. (Deut 8:16ff) As God's faithful stewards our responsibility is to make use of these supplies for God's own glory. That happens only when we use our resources in God's will and for His purposes. (Rom 11:36)

At any moment all that we accumulate and cherish might vanish away; this is true even about us. There is nothing permanent. History stands witness to this solemn fact. No dictator could survive for long in spite of all the power they wielded. Repeated refusal to learn this and change testifies to the senselessness and depravity of the human heart.

## Fret not

God's words to all the oppressed and mistreated are reassuring. Man may refuse to stand with the marginalized and voiceless. Many may disregard the struggles of the

helpless. But God Almighty will continue to be the stronghold and refuge for the destitute and maltreated. He will intervene at the right time.

Moses's words to the frightened, fleeing Israelites are remarkable, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." (Exo 14: 13, 14)

Fear and doubt may be natural when the evil forces unleash untold atrocities against common people. But the scripture encourages us to continue to hope in the Lord and patiently wait for the Lord's time. The world will witness the mighty hand of God against the fleshly weapons of the enemy.

## Solution

Is there any hope for the proud and haughty other than destruction? Yes, that is the gospel of Christ. If they realize their foolishness, humble themselves and confess their sins, there is hope. (1John 1:7, 9) The ultimate solution for sinful man is true transformation through the miraculous working of the Spirit of God through Jesus Christ. Only when the Lord Jesus Christ rules the heart of man one become truly humble, loving and caring. (Matt 5: 3 – 9; Zeph 3:11) It is then alone one willingly and sacrificially support the weaker one. (Rom 4:21; 1Cor 8:13; 10:33)

Absolute peace and harmony is possible only when individuals come under the Lordship of Christ and voluntarily submit to His will. (Rom 5:1; Acts 10:36; Isa 2:4; 11: 1 – 8) That is true in every area, like home, church, society and among nations.



# BRIEF NOTES ON TABERNACLE – 10: FINE TWINED LINEN

 By Charles .E. Wigg, Australia

**T**his speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ as the perfect Servant, and emphasizes His perfect righteousness. The fine linen, clean and white, in which the Bride is arrayed in Rev. 19: 8, is said to be the “righteousness of the saints”. The Lord Jesus did what was right, not out of any sense of duty, but because He loved it, Psalm, 45: 7. In Isaiah 53:11, God calls Him; “My righteous servant”.

Linen has great wearing qualities, and will wear longer than any cloth made of natural fibres. While teaching on this subject on one occasion, I was emphasizing this aspect of linen, and after the meeting an old sister came to me and told me that she still has a beautiful linen table cloth that was used by her grandmother. This sister and her husband had been married for more than 60 years, so the cloth would have been more than a hundred years old, and she told me that it was still in good condition. So we may rightly speak of the fine twined linen as being the cloth of service.

It is Mark's gospel that emphasizes the glory of Christ as God's perfect servant. We could write as a caption over that Gospel the words that God spoke through Isaiah “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in

whom My soul delights! (Isa 42: 1) Mark gives us no details concerning the conception, birth or boyhood of Christ, nor of His years of adolescence. He introduces Him to us as a servant, preaching the Gospel, working in the service of His heavenly Father. Mark constantly uses the words “immediately and straightway”, to emphasize the fact that the Lord Jesus never wasted a moment.

In Mark 7: 37 we hear the people say of God's servant, “He does all things well”. Then as the Gospel closes he tells us that though the Lord Jesus was received up into heaven, yet when the disciples went forth everywhere to preach, the Lord was “working with them”. (Mark 16: 20) Yes, He is still serving.

Thus the gate of the tabernacle brings before us the fourfold aspects of the glory of Christ, the only one, through whom men can draw near to God. Entering through the gate represents the repentant sinner, coming to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

When one does this, the new birth takes place. They are then able to see the kingdom of God, things that had remained a mystery before. They enter the kingdom of God, by surrendering their lives to trust and to obey the Lord Jesus, the King.

# EXHORTATION:

## BLINDNESS FOR GOD'S GLORY!

JOHN 9:1-3

 By Tom Johns, Austin Texas.

One of the most puzzling yet thoroughly reassuring verse that we find in the Bible is here in Romans 8:28 - "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

We may never realize its full significance or see it come to fruition to its fulness until God graciously reveals it to us when He indeed does. But this theme of God's sovereign providence upon our lives is an overarching theme of the Bible. When we read the Scriptures from cover to cover, we start realizing how God brings this verse and its message to life. Let's look at a passage from the Gospel of John in this context.

"As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him." John 9:1-3 [NASB]

The whole chapter of John 9 is devoted to this miraculous healing. There are multiple themes in this chapter but let us focus on just one - 'God receives glory from the lifelong blindness of a young man, a congenital

condition.' Jesus declared that this blind man's condition from his birth was to bring glory to God's name when others were focusing on other reasons.

### Chosen Vessel

This blind beggar was a vessel specifically chosen by God to display God's power and compassion at a critical juncture of Jesus' public ministry. This miracle testified Jesus's creative and divine power by transforming a totally blind person to see the daylight for the very first time. The dead nerves and cells felt the touch of its creator and they came to life.

Until now, he was an ordinary beggar and probably remained as a burden to others in the society and to his parents. They had to care for a blind child all his life and now, as an adult he had to wander the streets to curb his hunger. His life appeared to be worthless and purposeless. But Jesus made it clear that the life he spent so far, wandering in the dark, was to shed light in a focused way into the mysterious truth about God that 'God can cause all things to work together for good.'

Until God reached out to this man, his life must have been a long saga of miseries. He had no hope, and he must have been going around with no purpose in life. His parents

and others may have believed that he is none but an object lesson of hidden sins of either of himself in the womb or by his parents in some unknown ways. But little did people know that all along God was grooming this helpless beggar to display God's power.

### Mysterious Miseries

We could also be facing such miseries and uncertainties; a child with mental challenges, a person with chronic illness, someone going through mental illness, a premature or accidental death, financial crisis, not been able to get married, troubled marriages, etc. No matter what we who are followers of Christ go through, God will ultimately make it for good and He would receive glory through it all.

Bible has many such examples, and this is just one. Christian life is mysterious in

many ways. Paul puts it so eloquently in 2 Cor. 6: 9-10."As unknown yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing all things." Apostle John wrote, "Now we are children of God, and it has not appeared yet what we will be. We know that when He appears." (1John 3:2)

We are called to be faithful in serving God in the circumstances that He had placed us. When we do, God will make all things work together for good for us and give us the divine 'peace that surpasses all our understanding' [Phil 4:7] and lead us to a joyful Christian life. God received glory through the lifelong blindness of an insignificant beggar. If so, are there any situations that we are facing today that God cannot transform to a glorious end?

## ANECDOTE:

# THE COST OF STUBBORNNESS

 Source: Closer Walk

**I**n the summer of 1986, two ships collided in the Black Sea off the coast of Russia. Hundreds of passengers died as they were hurled into the icy waters below.

News of the disaster was further darkened when an investigation revealed the cause of the accident. It wasn't a technology problem like radar malfunction or even thick fog. The cause was human stubbornness.

Each captain was aware of the other ship's presence nearby. Both could have steered clear, but according to news reports, neither captain wanted to give way to the other. Each was too proud to yield first. By the time they came to their senses, it was too late.

# TRIBUTE

## Easow Josifus (1940 – 2022)

 By Nelson Thomas

The home call of every born again child of God is indeed a celebration for heaven. It's a clear answer to the prayers of their Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:24). Naturally, we who remain will always miss our dear ones and continue to feel the pain of separation, albeit the hope of reunion one day.



In the recent past, from the Mumbai area also we have seen number of dear ones departing to be with the Lord. Memories of each one of them are precious; we always remember their good works for the Lord and endeavour to follow their footsteps. Furthermore, due to various reasons some of them have cast lasting impressions which we cannot easily forget.

Such is the case of dear Uncle Easow Josifus of Andheri East who went to be with the Lord on 31st March 2022, just 4 months

after his wife's home call. He was fondly called by many as 'Sahar Joseachayan'.

He was one of the few brethren as far as I know who successfully carried out a business while joyfully spending a good part of its profit for the cause of Christ. He had a systematic way of giving. With a list of fulltime servants of God from all over India, he supported them on a regular basis. It was absolutely done in secret and without any conditions.

It was through his efforts that the Lord's work in and around Andheri East commenced and prospered. Along with his local church Hebron Christian Assembly Sion he started various ministries in Sahar. He encouraged many servants of God to visit this area for short term ministries. Being close to the international airport, many well-known preachers could visit him and be part of the Lord's work at Sahar. This resulted in the conversion of many and subsequently a local church was formed in the course of time.

There are some who are tempted to control and manipulate God's people using their resources. But this dear achayan always preferred to stay behind the scene, and never wanted to be in the leadership of the local church.

The Lord's servant Itty Varghese who was instrumental in the Lord's hands along with



dear Joseachayan for the establishment of Bethany Christian Assembly testified about him that though he was the backbone of the ministry, he never interfered in its functioning.

Not only in his business, even in his dealings with all others he was very wise and discerning. He loved and cared for others irrespective of their denominational background.

Around 40 years ago, his wife Saramma became a heart patient and needed a pacemaker. His loving and prayerful care for her ever since was unique. Few years ago he was affected with Parkinson disease yet he made every effort to be present at every common function like wedding and funeral to meet God's people.

On 27th November 2021 his beloved wife Saramma was called home at the age of 77 and that further deteriorated his health. It pleased the Lord to call him home on

31st March 2022 putting an end to all the sufferings he had in this mortal body.

What is written about Mordecai in Esther 10:3 is completely true about dear Joseachayan. "... he was great among the Jews and popular with the multitude of his brothers, for he sought the welfare of his people and spoke peace to all his people." (ESV)

May the Lord continue to comfort and strengthen his dear children Stanley and Shirley and their families to faithfully follow the legacy of this godly couple.



## OUTLINE

# DEATH OF CHRIST

 By Nelson Thomas

- i. It was a pre-planned death,
- ii. It was a natural death,
- iii. It was a supernatural death,
- iv. It was a graceful death,
- v. It was a needful death,
- vi. It was a vicarious death,
- vii. It was an efficacious death,
- viii. It was a voluntary death,
- ix. It was a cruel and painful death,
- x. It was a shameful death,

Rev 13:8.  
John 19:33, 34.  
John 19:28 – 30; Rom 5:12.  
Luke 23:34, 43.  
John 3:14, 15; Matt 16:21.  
John 10:11; 1Peter 2:24; 3:18.  
Hebrews 2:10, 14, 15; 13:8.  
John 10:17, 18; Matt 20:28.  
Matt. 27:33, 34.  
Gal 3:13; Deut 21:23.

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