

THE DAYS OF

Your Youth

ISSUE 42

EUROPE
TENTMAKERS SPECIAL!

*Climbing the
hill called*
**God's
Will**

26

**A "Creative" Porn Watching
Excuse Expunged**



buy today
3 Books
 by **DUKE JEYARAJ**

**Daniel in Dell • Straight Talk
 Good News for the Google Generation**

For only
₹500

Payment link WhatsApp +91 8886 040 605

What is Covered In **Daniel in Dell**: A chapter by chapter study of the Book of Daniel where real life situations are addressed; we are talking about situations such as, "What must I do if my peers in the workplace get envious of me?", etc. Chapters on End-Times, the Antichrist, Starting Small Group Fellowships also there.

What is Covered in **Straight Talk**: What the Bible teaches about depression, sex, love, marriage, porn (seven chapters on this subject alone), phone addiction, sexual temptation victory, masturbation, homosexuality, wise life

partner choice, sex-inside-marriage doubts, etc. in 50 chapters spread over 350 pages, taught with brutal frankness.

What is Covered In **Goodnews for the Google Generation**: Fresh Gospel presentations for the Google Gen world in prose, poetry and testimony (Duke's daughter's miracle birth story). Gospel presented following the model of Jesus in Luke 13 and Paul in Acts 17, that is, Gospel wrapped around contemporary events. In this book the Gospel is wrapped around unforgettable cricket games, football games and terror events.



This magazine serves as the voice of Grabbing the Google Generation from Gehenna Mission (G4 Mission) – an inter-church, inter-organisational ministry for present-day people founded by Duke Jeyaraj. It's vision is to captivatingly connect the world of Youth with the Word of Yahweh (the Bible) so that young people and young professionals would remember their creator in THE DAYS OF THEIR YOUTH (Eccl. 12:1) (hence this name). G4 Mission is run by freewill offerings of individual Indians. It is not funded by any church, or para-church organisation in India or abroad.

**CONNECT
 WITH DUKE**

WhatsApp: +91-8886 040 605 | [linkedin.com/in/dukej](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dukej) |
[youtube.com/@dukej](https://www.youtube.com/@dukej) | twitter.com/dukejeyaraj | [soundcloud/](https://www.soundcloud.com/dukejeyaraj)
[shoutaloud](https://www.shoutaloud.com/dukejeyaraj) | www.dukewords.com | [instagram/dukejeyaraj](https://www.instagram.com/dukejeyaraj)



04

► **Climbing the Hill Called God's Will**

Randomly opening the Bible, and reading the first verse does not lead to the discovery of God's Will!



▼ **The Electrifying Story of The English Bible**

“Enemy” is Made “Friend” if We Expect to Die In Case Jesus’ Coming Tarries? 22

► **What I Learnt from the 10 Virgins Story**

The wise virgins said “no” to the request of the foolish virgins



27

A “Creative” Porn Watching Excuse Expunged

26

My Second Chance

28

Sharing the Message of Hope!

29

A Witness for Jesus in Norway

31

Pursuing God’s Will

34

World Cup Final 2022 Poem

44

BANK: Karur Vysya Bank
Branch: Dr. A. S. Rao Nagar Branch, Hyderabad, India
A/C Name: G4 Mission
A/C Type: Savings Bank
A/C Number: 146515500004395
IFSC Code: KVBL0001465
SWIFT Code: KVBLINBBIND
MICR Code: 500053013

Scan to make a donation




The bank information on the left should help you transfer a donation/ subscription to our ministry. Please send a message/WhatsApp message to +91-8886040605 when you make a transfer for quick acknowledgement. Please leave your postal address with pin-code as well in that message.

Cover Photo by Murat Gün @ unsplash

Duke Jeyaraj, Chennai, India.

(we have to move from the present rented base as that flat has been sold)

This magazine is for private circulation only. Some of the pictures used in this magazine are downloaded from the internet. The publisher does not claim ownership of these nor does intend to use them for commercial purposes.

An aerial photograph of a dirt path winding through a rugged, rocky landscape. Two people are walking along the path, one further ahead than the other. The terrain is dark and textured with rocks and soil. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Let us climb
the hill called
God's will with
confidence! And
when we do
that we become
more and more
like Jesus, who
said this long
before the
first Christmas
happened:
'Behold, I have
come to do
your will, O God,
as it is written of
me in the scroll
of the book'
(Heb. 10:7 ESV).

Climbing the hill called **God's Will**

What is the most pleasurable day in your life? The day you got married? The day your baby was born? For Suniel Shetty, Indian Actor, that day seems to be the day when India became the first ever nation to win the One Day International World Cup at home in 2011. "Now that India has won the Cricket World Cup before my own eyes, I can die in peace!" – I heard him saying when I watched that Final live on 02 April. For Lionel Messi, it was the day when he finally won the Football World Cup on 18 December 2022 when Argentina beat France in what was perhaps the greatest ever football match. Peter Drury, the ace Football commentator expressed this with these memorable lines: 'As he falls in love with the object in the world that his heart most desired – the football World Cup Trophy – it is hard to escape the supposition that he has rendered himself today: the greatest of all time.' When I witnessed the birth of my daughter standing inside the operation theatre as my wife went through a C-section operation on 12 November 2007, it was one of my life's most pleasurable days!

Someone has said, "To know God's will is man's greatest treasure; to do His will, is life's greatest privilege!" I agree! I would say life becomes most pleasurable when we go about doing God's will! Yes, we can make every day 'the most pleasurable day' by doing God's will! As I go about doing little tasks in line with God's will for me to grab the Google Generation from going to Gehenna (the word Jesus used for hell), my life, my daily life, is most pleasurable! I will not chuck this for anything in the world! You too must discover God's purpose and will for your life! And when you discover that and do tasks in line with that purpose, your life also will become most pleasurable!

DUKE JEYARAJ



For Lionel Messi, Life's most pleasurable moment was on 18 December 2022 when he led Argentina to a World Cup win. For the Christian Believer however, life's most pleasurable moment will be when....

Why should we spend time finding and doing God's will for our lives? Why should we chase after Divine Direction for our lives? Not just because we will get our life's greatest pleasure when we are busy doing that, but also because we become more and more like Jesus when we do that! Remember, Jesus prayed this way in the Garden of Gethsemane: "Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done!" (Luke 22:42). Yes, finding and doing God's will for our lives makes us like Jesus who did the same! It makes us like Jesus who taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven!" (Matt. 6:10). Is not this single motivation enough for us to find and fulfil God's will for our lives? It is, but there are more reasons in the Bible.

Knowing and doing the will of God leads us to mature in our relationship with Christ! I gather this from the Apostle Paul's words about Epaphras: "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God" (Col. 4:12).

Is there a map in the Bible which we can use to climb the proverbial hill called "God's will"?

There are wrong ways people commonly use to discover God's will. Let me talk about those ways, first up:

1. The Stomach Way:

In Ezekiel 21:21 we read about the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar trying to use what is above the stomach, the liver, to discover which city to attack as he begins a military campaign. This method of finding God's will involving divination pointed to Jerusalem (Ezek. 21:22). The people of Jerusalem think this decision of Babylon is foolish (Ezek. 21:23). It was God who was directing king Nebuchadnezzar to attack Jerusalem, though king Nebuchadnezzar used a wrong way to find God's will! Robert W. Jenson's commentary on Ezekiel is helpful for us to grasp all of this. Unlike king Nebuchadnezzar, we know the living God. And we should not use this way, or any way associated with pagan divination, to find God's will!

2. The Stars Way:

Amos sarcastically mocked the people of North Israel for trying to figure out the future by studying the position of the stars (check out Amos 5:26 where he mocks the followers of 'Kaiwan, your star god'). Danny F. Faulkner points out that the word 'kaiwan' found in Amos 5:26 is a derivative of the Babylonian word for the planet Saturn. "However, without vowels, it is also similar to the (plural) Hebrew word for 'tabernacle(s), which is why the Septuagint (the earliest available Greek translation of the written-in-Hebrew Old Testament) and King James Version translated it as 'tabernacle'."

Yes, don't the words 'kaiwan' (Saturn) and 'mishkan' (Tabernacle) rhyme? Therefore, Amos' message using creative word-play here is this: to know God's will one needs to seek His presence ('mishkan' - tabernacle), not seek to know the position

of the planets (referred to as 'kaiwan' - Saturn) which He created!

3. The Seer Way:

Prophet Isaiah observed that the people of Babylon (see Isa. 47:1) were "worn out" because of their "many consultations" with "astrologers" who "observed the stars" to "predict monthly what will happen to you" (Isa. 47:12-14). They were worn out waiting for these false predictions to come true! The "friends in sorcery", the "magician cronies" the people of Babylon "have been in cahoots with" all their life (Isa. 47:15, The Message) won't be able to save them when God brings judgment upon them – this Prophet Isaiah makes clear.

Contacting a seer to know what the future holds, or to know which way to take is explicitly forbidden as per the laws of Moses. Hear his words yourself: "...don't ever get involved in any divining, such as predicting fortunes, interpreting omens, sorcery, casting spells, or trying to contact ghosts, spirits, or the dead. The Eternal is horrified when anyone does these things. It's because of these horrible practices that the Eternal your God is driving those nations out ahead of you" (Deut. 18:10b-12, The Voice). To get guidance from a diviner's wand was one of the sins of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, according to the writings of Prophet Hosea (Hos. 4:12, The Voice).

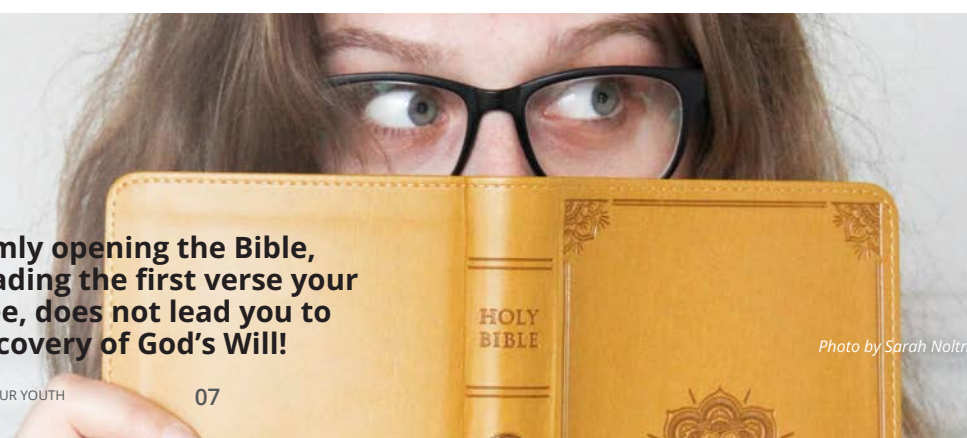
4. The "Scripture" Method:

Some people think it is alright to use "Scripture" any way they want to, to discover God's will.

Let's say you are in a hospital. There is a person about to die. And you are called to pray for that person. You open your Bible randomly. The verse that your eyes spot as

you open the Bible is Psalm 118:17. It reads this way, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD" (KJV). Does that mean that person you are about to pray for will most definitely get healed and won't die! No! If this bizarre method is okay then we have to say the following illustration of finding God's will is also okay:

A person was contemplating suicide. He wanted to find out if it was God's will that he should commit suicide. So he followed this oft-used 'Scripture' method of finding God's will. He randomly opened the Bible. His eyes fell on Matthew 27:5 where it said, "Judas went and hung himself!" He closed the Bible and opened it again randomly. This time his eyes fell on Luke 10:27 where he read the phrase, "Go and do likewise!" He tried to summarize what he believed the Lord was telling him to do: "Judas went and hung himself; Go and do likewise!" He wanted one final confirmation. So he once again closed the Bible and opened it randomly. This time, as he opened the Bible, his eyes were transfixed on John 13:27 that says, "What you are about to do, do quickly!" Does this person conclude that God was leading him to commit suicide through the "Scripture" method of finding God's will? Absolutely not! Committing suicide can never be God's will for anyone in any circumstance when the whole counsel of Scripture is considered (Acts 3:15 says Jesus is the Author of our life, and so He gets to decide when our life will end). Similarly, whether a person is healed or not, depends on the sovereign plan of God for that person at that point in time (Hebrews 2:4 clearly says the gifts of the Holy Spirit, presumably the gift of healing, operates according to the will of God). It cannot be discovered by randomly opening scripture and reading the first verse your eyes spot!



Randomly opening the Bible, and reading the first verse your eyes see, does not lead you to the discovery of God's Will!

Photo by Sarah Noltner @ Unsplash

Let me illustrate this further with my own example. When I was doing the Masters in Divinity course in Southern Asia Bible College, Bangalore, my parents brought me a marriage proposal (at the end of my first year there in 1999). This kindled in me a realisation that I was finally of marriageable age! My life partner had to be chosen! So, I went into a time of prayer. I also was reading the Word of God. One day, during this time, I read 2 Peter chapter 1 in my morning devotion. That chapter has a reference to the “bright morning star” (see 2 Peter 1:19). Jesus is compared to the Bright Morning Star in that passage. This did not mean that it was God’s will that I marry a girl whose middle name would be “Early Star” (another way of saying ‘bright morning star’) even though I was thinking along the lines of writing a letter of marriage proposal to a Blessing Youth Mission (BYM) missionary kid named Evangelin Early Star Selvam! Marrying Evangelin Early Star Selvam was God’s will for me not because I read her name, or something like her name, when I read 2 Peter 1 during the days I was looking for a life partner. Rather, she was God’s girl for me for other reasons – reasons I will talk about later on in this essay. As a starter let me say this: Evangelin Early Star Selvam could well be a person I could marry knowing it was God’s will for me to do so, because of the simple fact that she was a believer and the Bible says in I Corinthians 7:39 that any believer can marry another believer if they both like each other!

Now, that we have understood the wrong ways to find God’s will, let us learn about the right ways to find God’s will. Before that we need to grasp that there are three kinds of God’s will. We know that there are two main kinds of phones in the planet right now: Apple and Android phones. As a keen, involved, co-shopper with my dear wife, I have discovered that there are various kinds of sarees. Yes we have various kinds of sarees – crepes and chiffons, Pochampally and Pattu, Kanchi Cotton and Kalamkari Cotton, Gadwal Silks to Georgettes, from Venkatagiri Silk to Sambalpuri Ikat Silk, etc. But it is sad that many believers of our time do not know that the Bible talks about different types or categories when it comes to the will of God.

Let me present these:

1. God’s Sovereign Will

God’s sovereign will concerns God’s purpose and will operational from eternity past to eternity future. A.W. Pink talks about the sovereign will of God thus: *Without a doubt, a world-crisis is at hand, and everywhere men are alarmed. But God is not! He is never taken by surprise. There is no unexpected emergency which now confronts Him, for He is the One who “worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Eph. 1:11). He further writes, “All things” are subject to His immediate control: “all things” are moving in accord with His eternal purpose, and therefore, “all things” are “working together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). It must be so, for “of Him, and through Him and to Him are all things” (Rom. 11:36).*

Prophet Daniel expressed the sovereign will of God very clearly in Daniel 4:35 which read like this: ‘All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as He pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back His hand or say to Him: “What have you done?”’ (NIV).

2. God’s Moral Will

God’s moral will for us concerns what we should believe in and how we should behave. God’s moral will is applicable for all believers. No one is exempt. God’s specific will may be different for each believer, but His moral will is the same for all believers everywhere – for those in Boston, or Bosnia, for those in Bangalore, or Bangkok, for those in Beijing, or Buenos Aires.

Peter writes that “in all things” we do – be it speaking or serving - God must “be glorified through Jesus Christ” (I Peter 4:11, NASB).

We can “prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:1-2, NKJV) by being holy both in thoughts and in our bodily acts. Our ‘renewed minds’ won’t strip a person of the opposite sex naked inside the mind (Rom. 12:1-2). Our ‘surrendered bodies’ will refuse it when an opportunity to have sex outside the boundaries of marriage presents itself to us (Rom. 12: 1-2). But if we choose not to be holy both in the thought-level and body-level, we “conform” to the will of the “world” (Rom. 12:1-2) and not the “perfect, acceptable, good” will of God (Rom. 12:1-2).



You don't have to be confused if you could marry an unbeliever and later bring that person to Christ. "Commanding Scripture" (see I Cor. 7:39) says that option is not even open for you, a believer in Christ!

Apostle Paul wrote, "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality"(I Thess. 4:3 NKJV). When we live a life of daily sexual purity then we fulfil the moral will of God for us. When we say 'no' to things like porn-watching, sexual-touch of a person not our spouse, etc., we are fulfilling the moral will of God for all believers. This is so important that even Apostle Peter mentions it. He writes, "live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God" (I Peter 4:2 ESV). And in the next verse he qualifies what is living for human passions: "living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry" (I Peter 4:3 ESV). Apostle John also includes sexual purity in God's will for all of us using his own style in I John 2:17 where he says, "And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever" (ESV). And in the previous verse, Apostle John explains what the word 'world' in the previous verse means: the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life (I John 2:16 ESV). Saying 'no' to these knowing they only offer transient pleasures at best is one key way of fulfilling God's moral will for us, something when embraced offers eternal pleasures!

Apostle Peter expressed another aspect of God's moral will for all of us this way: "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not willing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9 NASB). Apostle Paul also said the same thing: "He (God) wants not only us but everyone saved. God's will is that everyone should be saved" (I Tim. 2:4 MSG). That is why it is God's will that all believers

get involved in the ministry in one way or the other!

It is God's moral will for every one of us to cooperate with the government and the law of the land we live in, as long as the command of the land's king does not clash with what is written in the Word. Apostle Peter implies this in 1 Peter 2:13-15.

It is also God's moral will that we excel and not be mediocre in our secular jobs. Apostle Paul makes this point in his letter to the Ephesians: 'Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man' (Eph. 6:5-6, ESV).

3. God's Individual Will

God has a unique plan for each one of us! Yes, He wants all of us to be saved, to live holy, especially sexually holy, get involved in the ministry, etc., but for us as individuals He has a specific will. The Bible talks about this.

The psalmist wrote, "Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in Your book and planned before a single one of them began" (Psa. 139:16 HCSB). To Israel, God said famously in Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Eternal, "plans for peace, not evil, to give you a future and hope—never forget that" (The Voice).

For example, God told Philip the venue where he needs to witness (Acts 8, to the Ethiopian eunuch in a desert). Philip already knew it was God's will that he should get involved in the ministry as it is God's will that none should

perish (we saw that). But God also revealed His will as to where exactly he had to witness. He did the same in the case of Peter as well (Acts 10, to the Roman Centurion Cornelius in his house). Of course, both Philip and Peter would witness for Jesus in other locations as well. But God gave them specific directions where to witness in some cases. So, we can safely conclude that God has a specific will for each one of us! In fact, this is His promise to us! Haven't you read Psalm 32:8 where David writes down God's promise: "I will instruct thee and teach thee the way in which thou shalt go; I will counsel [thee] with mine eye upon thee" (DARBY).

God had a specific plan for a young man named **Jozef De Veuster** born in Belgium on January 3, 1840. He would preach Jesus and serve the lepers who lived in Molokai in the Inlands of Hawaii (part of the USA) till he also got infected with leprosy and died! Jozef (49) believed that God's specific plan and will for his life was to be a missionary to the lepers in Hawaii! **Philip James Elliot** (known as Jim Elliot), born on October 8, 1927, in the United States believed it was God's plan for him to land a plane among the Huaorani people of Ecuador making an attempt to share the Gospel with them. He and his ministry team members were killed shortly by that tribe. It was God's specific plan that Jim Elliot (28) would die a martyr. **John Allen Chau**, born in the United States in December 18, 1991, believed it was God's will to share the Gospel with the tribals of North Sentinel Islands part of the Andaman Inlands of India. He was dropped in that island by some locals. He too died as a martyr for Christ. God's specific plan for John Allen Chau (26) was to be a missionary martyr – it certainly looks like that.

I believe God's specific plan for my life is to grab the Google Generation from going to Gehenna (the word in Aramaic Jesus used for Hell)! So I plan activities during the day keeping this in mind. I put up social media posts keeping this in mind. When I preach, I keep this in mind. This specific plan of God for me,

moves me to say 'No' to many things that won't help in the fulfilment of God's clear plan for my life!

Henry and Richard Blackaby wrote, "God does not need to provide a blinding light in the grocery store aisle to lead us to the correct toothpaste. However, He will guide us in matters that meet specific needs in our lives and the lives of others. God told Elijah what and when to eat (1 Kings 19:5-7). Jesus gave instructions to salvage a wedding party (John 2:7). He told people where to fish (John 21:6) and when to fish (Matt. 17:27)... He wanted people to do His will as part of His redemptive plan for humanity. To disobey Him – as Jonah, Achan, and numerous others mentioned in the Bible discovered – is to place one's life perilously in opposition to God and His will" (Quote from the book, *How Then Should We Choose? Three Views on God's Will and Decision Making*, Kregel Publications, 2009).

What about you? Have you discovered God's specific plan for your life? What about you? Have you figured out what God's distinct plan for your life is? Have you pondered upon what God's peculiar and precise plan for your life is? You must!

How can we find God's specific will for us? Nicky Gumbel's writings gave me this outline and I have filled up the details with my own study of the Bible. I also share incidents from my life to explain how exactly each step of discovering divine direction works.

1. Commanding Scripture (Reading)

Whatever we choose to do in our lives should not be against 'commanding' Scripture which we can discover through meticulous reading of the Bible and responsible interpretation.

Let me explain. We cannot join a porn production company as an IT Engineer even if they offer a cool salary! Why? Because the Bible clearly teaches porn production and watching is wrong. "The Lord was not pleased with the thing that David did!" so says 2 Sam. 11:27. And the first thing he did in that chapter

What about you? Have you discovered God's specific plan for your life? What about you? Have you figured out what God's distinct plan for your life is? Have you pondered upon what God's peculiar and precise plan for your life is? You must!

was to watch Bathsheba bathing. He was watching live porn in other words. And God was not pleased. Let me give another example: We won't even pray to ask God if we can marry a non-believer. Why? I Corinthians 7:39 – the commanding Scripture in question here – clearly says we can marry “anyone” but “only in the Lord”!


So take time to study the Scriptures before you make major decision in your life. Ask what does the Scripture command concerning the core issues at play in the decision I am about to make! “What does the Scripture say?” is a question which Apostle Paul often asked (see Gal. 4:30; Rom. 4:3). That is one reason perhaps he could say that he runs “with purpose in every step” (I Cor. 9:26, NLT). Paul lined up all the decisions he made as a believer/leader with the written Word of God. This gave him the calm assurance that he was in the centre of God's will in most matters.

When I chose to marry Evan, I was very sure I was not going against God's will though there was a lot of opposition to our marriage! For one, she is a believer. I too am. So according to the written Word of God, according to I Corinthians 7:39, we could get married. What was more, we were both ready to walk in the same direction! Amos 3:3 asks, “Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?” That is, we were both committed to walk the road of fulltime ministry together before we even met each other with a view of marrying each other! So, we ensured that the ‘Commanding Scripture’ did not stand against us when it came to our decision to get married to each other! That Evan and I belonged to different castes did not matter, because I Corinthians 7:39 says one can marry “anyone” (and NOT “anyone, provided the person is from your own caste”) “but only in the Lord!”

2. Controlling Spirit (Listening)

After we ensure that the decision we are about to take will not violate the written Word of God, or Commanding Scripture, the next step to find God's will is to spend sufficient time praying about the matter at hand. When we pray, the Lord through the Holy Spirit controls our spirit and directs it towards one option.

Jesus prayed the entire night and the following day chose twelve disciples (Luke 6:12-13). Please notice here that before the decision-

A photograph of a person wearing a blue and white plaid button-down shirt and blue jeans, sitting on the ground. They are holding an open book, likely a Bible, and appear to be reading. The background is a natural, outdoor setting with some dry leaves and earth.

My parents brought a marriage proposal to my attention at the end of my first year in Bible college. That's when I raced to the eucalyptus gardens opposite the Bible college. I paced there up and down. I got on my knees. I prayed. I asked God to direct me.

Photo by Ben White @ Unsplash

making was done, there was an unhurried waiting in the presence of His Father! It will be during this time of prayer, God can possibly plant what James called the “implanted Word” in James 1:21 (ESV). This “implanted Word” will direct you towards the will of God.

I mentioned that my parents brought a marriage proposal to my attention at the end of my first year in Bible college. That’s when I raced to the eucalyptus gardens opposite the Bible college. I paced there up and down. I got on my knees. I prayed. I asked God to direct me. At that time, there was a small list of girls whom I could potentially marry – all believers, all with some inclination for Christian ministry, albeit in various levels – in my mind, before I went into this time of prolonged prayer. I made sure even at this juncture that I would not violate the first step when it came to finding God’s will: The Commanding Scripture check (explained in the previous point). I wanted God to speak to me with regard to which girl from the list inside my mind I should marry (or ask to marry). At the end of that prayer, I felt that God put an “implanted Word” that moved me to write a letter to Evangelin Early Star, the daughter of a BYM missionary, who at that time was working in a hospital in Chennai, asking if she would marry me! And she said “yes”! We have been married for over 21 years as I type these words on 1 December 2022.

How exactly do we sense God speaking to us during a time of prayer? Apostle Paul offers a clue. In Philippians 4, he connects the word “peace of God” with prayer. Let’s hear his exact words: “Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7). Here Paul tells us that we must bring “everything” – all matters – before God in prayer. And when we do that, God is able to fill us with a peace ‘which surpasses every thought’ (HCSB), a peace “far beyond human understanding” (GNB), a peace that ‘surpasses all comprehension’ (NASB), ‘a peace that is beyond any and all of our human understanding’ (The Voice)

After spending seasons in supplication, see if you have the peace of this quality! Notice that this peace will “guard our heart” (Phil. 4:7).

The original readers of this letter would have immediately identified with and appreciated the metaphor that Paul used here as they were quite used to seeing Roman soldiers guarding the garrison city of Philippi. This peace, which Paul talks about here, is hence a safe-guard, a pointer, a green signal that God puts inside us to direct us towards His will, the way He has placed the Holy Spirit-directed conscience inside us to stop us and red-flag us when we are about to commit a sin! And if what you are about to decide is in line with God’s written Word – does not violate Commanding Scripture – then you can rest assured that you are receiving a divine green signal to do what you plan to do: get married to a particular person / join a particular company for a job / settle in a particular city and build a house, etc.

There can be occasions when you feel that you have “peace” when you are about to do something against the written Word of God as well. Jonah was apparently very peaceful when he proceeded towards Tarshish in direct disobedience to God’s Word! I say that because he could sleep soundly right after disobeying God (Jonah 1:5)! This peace did not last, however!

Daniel is perhaps the best example of a time of prayer resulting in peace and the peace resulting in leading one to take a major decision. He was told to pray to none except the king of the land he lived in. That’s when Daniel prayed (Dan. 6:10). After this time of prayer, he made a big decision to disobey the king’s command – directed by the written Word of God from outside which had several commands against idolatry and also by the peace of God from within. Consequently, he was thrown into the lion’s den. But Daniel was cool as a cucumber there. But for the king who threw him there, there was no peace nor sleep (Dan. 6:18)!

3. Common Sense (Thinking)

Paul writes these words to Timothy, the young man he trained to do the ministry with fatherly love: “For God has not given us a spirit of fearfulness, but one of power, love, and sound judgment” (2 Tim. 1:7 HCSB). This is mentioned in the Old Testament as well. The Proverbs penman wrote, “You simple people, use good judgment. You foolish people, show some understanding” (Prov. 8:5, NLT). “My child, hold

onto wisdom and good sense; don't let them out of your sight" (Prov. 3:21 NCV). Having "sound judgment" is not something that God does not want us to have! It can be a crucial tool as we try to decipher divine direction when at life's crossroads! It can be a guide as we try to climb the hill of "God's Will"!

Take the key decision of choosing a life partner for example. When two people who have been raised by two different sets of parents start to live together, difference of opinion is something one can expect! When two people groomed by variant sets of moms and dads become bride and groom, there is possibly room for "dishum-dishum" (disagreements). So a person with "sound judgment" would want to have a prior arrangement on how to settle these sure-to-come clashes and difference of opinions! That is why the Bible's common sense-driven / sound judgment-driven command is that 'a believer marries a believer' (1 Cor. 7:39)! And when a believer couple do have the inevitable disagreements, the foreseeable small fights, certain-to-come frictions, they will have a common court of appeal to turn to - the Word of God. (We know for the believer the Bible is the final court of appeal for all matters of belief and behaviour, don't we?)

literally hundreds of others were ready to join the same organisation and do the very same job I did; I was pretty sure that they would do an even better job than me; I was not at all able to focus on my job anymore as I was often taking loss-of-pay leaves to take up the constant preaching invitations I got; I was not able to sleep enough during the day after I returned from work, as I would choose rather to work on the magazine I began as the voice of the ministry I started (I am talking about this magazine which you hold in your hand - The Days of Your Youth) and spend time playing with my newly-born daughter, Datasha. This meant I would, at times, feel drowsy when I did the graveyard work shift, logging in at 5:30 PM, logging out at 2:30 AM and reach home at 4 AM. On the other hand, to do God's work fulltime among the Google Generation, there was a perceivable lack of labourers! God's challenging cry could not be missed: 'Whom shall I send to work fulltime among the Google Generation?' So, I decided to quit my job and join G4 Mission! As I write these words, it has been over 14 years since I did that, and I have not regretted this decision, one bit!

A young man "lacking sense" (Prov. 7:7) took the utterly foolish decision of meeting a married woman who was alone in her house.



Photo by Keira Burton @ Pexels

Through 'circumstantial signs' God showed me His Will even as I experienced a romantic rejection - 'one-sided love' as it is called - while I was in my secular college! This was for my ultimate good, I discovered later!

It is this God-given, Holy Spirit-directed common sense that led me to quit my job with HSBC Global Resourcing on 7 November 2008 and join the ministry I started, Grabbing the Google Generation from Gehenna Mission (G4 Mission), fulltime. This is how I reasoned before I made that decision, with my wife encouraging me to do it: "If I quit this job,

Her husband was not at home when this young man "lacking sense" visited her home, following her seductive invitation. This resulted in untold danger for this young man: He ended up in "sheol" = the rough Old Testament word for "hell" (read the rest of the chapter). Had this young man used his God-given common sense, he would not have set foot inside the home of that married woman when her husband was

not at home! Let's use our God-given common sense to take wise decisions in our life!

4. Counsel of Saints (Talking)

The Proverbs penman wrote, "Plans fail when there is no counsel, but with many advisers they succeed" (Prov. 15:22 HCSB). Again in the same book we read: "Finalize plans with counsel, and wage war with sound guidance" (Prov. 20:18).

When we take guidance to make a key life decision which is in line with God's will, we must make sure the one who guides us, guides us to do what is in line with God's Word and never contrary to it! Jonadab gave Amnon the prince a displeasing-to-God crafty counsel that explained to him a blow-by-blow account of how to execute the rape of his half-sister (2 Sam. 13:5).

When I was in the crossroad of choosing the kind of ministry I would do after I graduated with Masters in Divinity from Southern Asia Bible College in March 2001, I consulted my teacher Rev. Dr. Ivan Satyavrata. I specifically asked him to give me guidance to choose between one of these: a ministry in a Bible college as a lecturer or a ministry with youth as a preacher/pastor. His wise counsel which appealed to the greater need for youth workers swung my choice towards youth ministry decisively. What was more, he gave this counsel after he had seen me as a student from close quarters for those three years! I would not exchange this life of pioneering an impactful inter-church youth ministry for anything else in the whole wide world!

5. Circumstantial Signs (Watching)

When Eliezer was on the mission of finding a life partner for his master's son, he did a lot of literal "wait and watch"! Here is what we read in Genesis 24: 'while the man silently watched her to see whether or not the LORD had made his journey a success' (Gen. 24:21). He tells the elders in the girl's family: "Now, if you are going to show kindness and faithfulness to my master (by sending your house's daughter, Rebekah), tell me; if not, tell me, and I will go elsewhere" (Gen. 24:49). But it was a resounding "Yes" from both the girl and the elders in the family (Gen. 24:55-58). In case Rebekah had said 'no', Eliezer would have understood that she was not the person God willed that her master's son should

marry. He would have continued his search. He would have moved on.

There was a time in my own life when I felt a girl in my secular college was God's girl for me. She had mentioned that she wanted to be a missionary in one of the written introduction time we had with the freshers. And that caught my attention. I proposed to her. I was head over heels in love with her. But it was one-sided love. I believe God hardened her heart so that she would say 'no' to me. This 'shut door' revealed to me that she was not God's girl for me. God who knew the end from the beginning (as we read in Isaiah 46:10) ensured that this particular girl would not budge an inch to my super desperate romantic efforts to get her attention! This had to happen, because down the line, God had another girl waiting for me, a girl who would be a perfect companion in my Google Generation ministry (I am talking about my wife Evangelin here). Paul talked about "open doors" (1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3) as did John (Rev. 3:8). These open doors implies to me that God paved a path through the free-will choice of the persons concerned to open a path which in turn opens the route to fulfilling God's will.

At one point in my life, a large Christian organisation invited me to a conference in the United States in which I had to do a presentation. They were even willing to buy my air travel for this trip. However, my US visa application was rejected. That was God's way of letting me know His will that I should focus on my Google Generation ministry to India. It has been my privilege in the last two decades to preach in over twenty Indian states my messages for the Google Generation and fulfil God's will in the one life I have.

Does that mean an "open door" ahead implies we must blindly rush in? Not always. When a top church in Hyderabad invited me to join them as a pastor after I started my own ministry, I politely declined! Popularity an open door may bring forth should not be the sole deciding factor when walking through an "open door" supposing it is God's will for us to do so (Gal. 1:10)!

But there were times even when the great Apostle Paul was not sure of what God's specific will for his life was. He wrote in Philippians 1:22: "Yet what shall I choose? I do not know!" In the next verse he talks about

the dilemma he faced with these words: "I am torn between the two..." (Phil. 1:23). So no one can be 100% sure about what God's specific will for them is. If they are humble they will acknowledge this! But it is important to keep moving forward using these principles! Staying stuck, using the excuse "I am trying to figure out God's will" - is not a biblical option!

Let's us climb the hill called God's will with confidence! And when we do that we become more and more like Jesus, who said this long before the first Christmas happened: 'Behold,

I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book' (Heb. 10:7 ESV).

Let's endure in this exciting journey of doing the will of God till our death or till the return of Jesus no matter what suffering comes! Hear the writer to the Hebrews: 'For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised' (Heb. 10:36).

TESTIMONIES

Duke Jeyaraj's book, *Straight Talk*, is a deep-truth-rooted guide for Christ-like living in this modern world, irrespective of the age we are in.

Many things I had perceived wrongly or in a different way were made crystal clear for me through *Straight Talk*. It made me repent and turn back to the Lord for many secret sins I was into and had thought to myself that there's no way out.

Though I was born in a Pentecostal Christian family, a lot of basic Biblical teachings and principles were always beaten-around-the-bush and it was considered inappropriate to be spoken to a church congregation. However, those areas are handled beautifully through this book by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, through the typically Duke-styled-sentences. I turn to this book whenever I want an answer for a doubt that rises in my walk with God.

This book has blessed me and my wife as we read it too often together after getting engaged to each other, during the days we were waiting and preparing to get married.



**"My Wife And
Myself Read
Straight Talk
Together in the
Days Leading
Up to Our
Marriage!"**

Kingston Samuel
and Junia

**The Mag
Team**

Content Edit: Sneha Robert (Chief Editor), Ida Selvakumar, Supriya Daniel, Johnson Kanakaraj, Deborah Snegalatha V, Enoch Joshua Daniel, Peniel Jacobson, Namrata Johnson, Dr. Ramyasree, Dale Nathan Duke, Bindu Mahima, Evan Duke, Pravin Thorat, Ribca Paul, Leonard Billy Graham, Deborah Gladys, Roshni

Design





The Electrifying Story of The English Bible

DALE NATHAN DUKE

Photo by Sixteen Miles Out @ Unsplash

I watched the movie '83 which grippingly narrated the history of India's maiden ODI World Cup win. One thing I realised while watching that movie was: One Day Internationals had 60 overs per innings those days. But I realised that I did not know the history of something far more important – the English Bible. So I dived deep into research and this essay is the result.

'All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness' (2 Tim. 3:16, NASB).

This verse from the Bible led to this key dictum for Christ-followers the world over: the Bible is the final court of appeal for all matters of belief and behaviour! Or to simply put it: no book in the world is as important as the Bible. The Holy Bible has a long intriguing history behind its existence. An important aspect of the history of medieval Europe is the translation of the Bible into English.

The English Bible would not have seen the light of day but for God's grace and the efforts of many people motivated by their love for God. In the course of this essay, I'll be exploring this translation history by including their contributions to it.

Covering even the common man!

John Wycliffe is supposed to have laid the foundation stone for the translation of the Holy Bible into English in the year 1382. He was known as the 'Morningstar of the Reformation' since he was one of the early nonconformists of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Though he was a Catholic priest himself, he had no qualms about protesting most of what he believed was the church's incorrect beliefs. His contestations had become widespread due to the support of his followers who were called the Lollards. As a keen Indian Premier League (IPL) follower, I have cheered for the big-hitting allrounder Kieron Pollard. But only after I joined the B.A. History honours program of my college and took up the course of medieval history of Europe, did I hear of the Lollards!

The Lollards organised themselves into a group called the Lollardy and spread Protestantism beliefs with great fervour by distributing popular tracts in English. Wycliffe had a personal belief that the Bible, which was the literal Word of God, was the ultimate authority

for the practice of the Christian faith. Besides, he believed that every individual believer in Christ had the right and responsibility to access and read the Bible. Both these beliefs spurred him on the journey to translate the Bible into English.

Do we have the noble desire like John Wycliffe had that even the common man should have access to the Bible? Do we wish that everyone in our reach will have an access to the Bible? I have joined my dad when he goes for Tracts Outreach using the two tracts he himself wrote, 1) *Bubbly Outside, Yet Empty Inside?* and, 2) *Two Who Walked Into Tough Situations: Dhoni and Guess Who?* When he gives out a tract, he often would say this: "This is the summary of the Bible wrapped around interesting contemporary events!" I was joyous about my involvement in distributing the interesting summaries of God's Word among people walking in the street, standing at traffic junctions, people leaving school, people leaving college, people travelling in the train, etc. Most memorably, I joined the tracts outreach that my dad did in Hyderabad outside the exam centre where I wrote my Class X CBSE Exams in 2019. Even my classmates received these tracts!

When your local church does not encourage you!

Let's come back to the electrifying story of the birth of the first English Bible. It is important to note that the Roman Catholic Church at those times had banned the translation of the Bible into the common languages of people. They believed the scriptures would become vulgar in nature if the Bible was accessible and readable by common people. Despite all these surrounding beliefs and his long-established position in the Catholic Church, he didn't back down from his translation goal by reasoning that if Moses and Jesus' disciples heard God's commands in their own language, why couldn't common people read it in their own tongue?

Are you part of a local church that expects you to just sit in the same place and do nothing else? Are you part of a family where there is no encouragement to do ministry? You can learn from the stalwarts of the translation of the English Bible. When the local church or your family discourages you, you should not simply sit and do nothing. You must fight. You must

move. You must do things for God in the one life you have!

Though Wycliffe may have not done the translation himself as his pupils and colleague, John Purvey and Nicholas of Hereford were the primary translators, he was the principal proponent of the entire project. A startling

translate the Bible restricted the circulation of the Bible. However, these copies were distributed and circulated by the Lollards to the best possible extent.

Can't we start with resources we already have?

It is noteworthy that Wycliffe used the Latin Vulgate to translate the Bible into English. The Vulgate was a Vulgar Latin version of the Bible with the word 'vulgar' meaning "used by common people". Jerome's efforts led to the completion of this translation in the year 400 AD. He translated it using Greek manuscripts available at those times. These Greek manuscripts were corrupt in nature, which in turn, resulted in some errors in the Vulgate. Although the Vulgate remained a formidable force for more than a thousand years before the King James Version was published, it gradually deteriorated through time as church history witnessed the birth of several better and more accurate Bible translations.

While the Wycliffite Bible used the Latin Vulgate, it didn't take the help of the original languages of the Bible - Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic - in its translation. The translation of the Bible from non-original languages cannot be particularly called 'pitch-perfect' in nature, since it is always preferable and recommendable to translate anything in the world from its original script and language, especially when it concerned the God-breathed, the Bible (1 Tim. 3:16). However, Wycliffe's efforts cannot be discounted as he set the base for the forthcoming translations of the Bible.

Wycliffe used resources - even though they were inferior to the presently available ones - to translate the Bible. Do we always wait till we have the best stage to preach God's Word or do we do it when opportunity presents itself? Do we always wait till we have a high-end laptop to do design work and video-edit for the Lord? Or do we start this off using the slow and low-budget laptops which we already have in possession?

Do obstacles offset you from your God-ordained course?

Let's re-join the gripping story of the birth of the English Bible. After Wycliffe's Bible had been in use for more than a century, it



Are you part of a local church that discourages you from getting involved in ministry? The story of how we got our English Bible will encourage you to overcome hurdles and get involved in the ministry!

Photo by Debby Hudson @ Unsplash

fact to note was that the Wycliffite Bible copies were hand-copied by scribes as print technology wasn't present in the world at that time. Tracy Sumner points out that the scribes were the best-educated men of that age who had handwritten content on vellum, which was an extremely expensive parchment derived from the skin of a calf or lamb. Hence, this restricted a huge proportion of the populace at that time from owning the Bible. This fact along with the ban by the Catholic Church to

was replaced by printed Bibles. Johannes Gutenberg was the man behind the beginning of printed Bibles in the world. Gutenberg produced the Gutenberg Bible which came to be the first full-length book to be printed on a movable type printing press, setting the tone for what came to be known as the 'Print Revolution' or the 'Gutenberg Revolution'. Being a version of the Latin Vulgate, this Bible was printed some on vellum and some on paper. Under the financial support of Johann Fust, the Gutenberg Bible was printed either in 1454 or 1455. Tracy Sumner notes that though the common ownership of the Bible didn't take place in Gutenberg's time, or sometime very soon after that, his efforts ensured that the Bible was made accessible and affordable to people as it is in today's world. Moreover, his innovation was a vital cog in the conduct of historic events like the Protestant Reformation and the Renaissance, both of which influence the ideology and lifestyle of the present world. Especially concerning its aid to the Reformation, this revolution ensured that the educated population was no longer blinded by the words of the "then-dominant-but corrupt" Catholic Church as Tracy Sumner puts it, when it concerned the Christian belief. Gutenberg's printing press published the first ever printed Bible in any vernacular language, a German language Bible called the Mentel Bible in 1466.

With time, the first proper printed English translation of the Bible based on its original languages was done by William Tyndale. A prominent figure in the Protestant Reformation and a Christian Humanist, he published Tyndale's New Testament. He had this burning desire to publish the English-translated version of the Bible since he observed that clergymen or preachers who had the access to the Bible didn't know much about the Bible whereas other common people weren't able to read the Bible due to linguistic barriers. This inspired him to translate the Bible into the common language - English - to ensure that even a farm boy would be aware of more scriptures than the preacher. He vowed he would do that, even if it cost him his life! Eventually all of this did cost Tyndale his very life!

Tyndale had to overcome several obstacles to ensure that his dream of publishing the Bible came true. The prohibition on the translation of the Bible was the primary reason behind

all these obstacles. His first obstacle came in the year 1523 when the Bishop of England and other church leaders revoked him for trying to lift the prohibition and support an English Testament. However, he mustered courage and decided to publish the Bible covertly in Cologne, Germany, in 1525. But this process was interrupted as there was pressure from city authorities. However, that didn't deter him from his goal. He ensured that his translation of the Bible was printed in the year 1526 at the German town of Worms. The completed copies were smuggled back to England. However, there were two roadblocks in this smuggling process. Firstly, the printing company was ambushed by authorities to stop the publication of the Bibles. Second, after alleging that Tyndale's book included numerous faults, the furious authorities and Church leaders in England, including King Henry VIII, Cardinal Wolsey, and Sir Thomas More, began purchasing large quantities of Bibles, only to burn them. But Tyndale remained unfazed by that as ironically, he used the proceeds of the sales to print more Bibles. Overall, approximately 3000 copies were printed. Besides, there were revised editions of the same in 1534 and 1535.

Do the obstacles that come when you start out to do things for God, dampen your enthusiasm? Learn from Tyndale. Tide over trials. Surf over suffering. Jump over injustices. Pole-vault over pain. Dance around disappointments. Keep moving forward.

Apart from using the original manuscripts, Tyndale's ambition to translate the Bible, especially that of the New Testament was aided by the efforts of fellow contemporaries. While Neil R. Lightfoot notes that Erasmus's New Testament in Greek had helped Tyndale, John Barton notes that Luther's New Testament in German served the same purpose as well. William Barrack has stated that Tyndale's translation was idiomatic in nature. He ascertains this point by quoting an exemplary phrase from the translation in Exodus 15:26 which goes like this - "The Lord thy surgeon". Furthermore, Tyndale had given the English language several new words that are now generally acknowledged as being from the Bible. The word 'atonement' (literally, 'at onement'), which means to unite with God and to cover one's sins, is a well-known illustration



Miles Coverdale took over the baton of key task of completing the translation of the first-ever full English Bible from William Tyndale. We must receive the baton from the European Missionaries who came to India as missionaries and complete the Jesus-given task of total world evangelization!

of this. As Barrack points out, the impact of his work was so far-reaching in history that 80 percent of the text of all the ensuing English Bibles until 1881 to 1885 (till the British Revised Version) were primarily adopted from Tyndale's translation of Bible passages.

Discipline in bible-reading: the least we can show!

One should note that Tyndale's Bible translation cannot be called by the widely known term 'Tyndale Bible' as it didn't consist of the entire translation of the Holy Bible. It just consisted only of the New Testament, while missing out on the Old Testament. Tyndale had started the translation work of the latter by completing the Pentateuch and Jonah. The Pentateuch in Greek denoted the compilation of the first five books of the Bible starting from Genesis to Deuteronomy. However, this translation process was left incomplete due to his painful martyrdom on the 6th of October in 1536 at Vilvoorde, a town in Belgium.

When there were people who were ready to give up their lives to get us the copy of the Bible, the least we can do is this: we must be ready to give up our indiscipline to read and study the Bible!

The man of God I am named after!

Carrying on Tyndale's legacy, there was the arrival of a God-sent figure in the form of Miles Coverdale who remained a faithful ally to Tyndale. He was responsible for the translation of the entire Bible into English which was printed in York in 1535. In his version of the Bible, the Apocrypha was first published in a

separate appendix rather than integrated into the text. William Barrack points out numerous instances where Coverdale had improved Tyndale's English. I am named after this wonderful man of God!

We are all called to be Miles Coverdales when it comes to the Great Commission. Jesus' disciple, Thomas came and first preached the Gospel in our country. And the baton passed on to other missionaries. Ragland came and preached the Good News to my dad's forefathers in south Tamil Nadu. Now, in this generation, the baton has passed onto us! Are we ready to run to the last man with the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Do we pray for stubborn people?

There were subsequent translations that came into existence in the forthcoming years, following Coverdale's translation. The 'Matthew Bible', published in 1537, came into existence through the efforts of John Rogers, who is thought to have adopted the pseudonym 'Thomas Matthew'. Following this, in 1539, the first English Bible which was authorized for public use came to be known as the 'The Great Bible'. This authorization was done by King Henry VIII, who changed his stance on the circulation of the Bible, as part of his separation from the Catholic Church. This was a fulfilment of Tyndale's last words before his death which went like this - "Lord, open the king of England's eyes". Shortly, in 1541, the king ordered that every parish must have a copy of the Great Bible. But this progress in the spread of God's Word was short-lived as Mary Tudor (known as 'Bloody' Mary), a devout Catholic, took the throne and desired England to return to Roman Catholic rule. Due



to this desire of hers, there was widespread persecution of Protestant reformers and translators like John Rogers and Thomas Cranmer in 1555. It was during this time that English Protestants found a safe place in the Protestant Church in Geneva. All these exiles had aspired for their families to read the Bible while they were in exile. This resulted in the production of the 'Geneva Bible' in 1560, under the protection of the reformer and leader of the Geneva Church, John Calvin.

God answered the prayer of intercession made by William Tyndale concerning the King of England! He is a prayer-answering God! He answers prayer according to His will. His will is that all should be saved (2 Peter 3:9). Do we pray for the salvation of that person – the most flagrant sinner in our world – and expect a positive answer? We must!

However, all these sacrifices of multiple people didn't go in vain as the iron-fisted control of the Catholic Church over the Word of God regarding its possession and reading by the common people finally ended with time. As a result, there was the publication of the best-selling book and version of the Bible ever printed in history: the King James Version. The KJV or the Authorized Version (called that though there is no record of it being authorized by anyone in power), had become the only current version of the Bible circulating among the English-speaking people, by the end of the seventeenth century. This version required the conscientious hard work of forty-seven men, known to be the world's most renowned Bible scholars and linguists of the day, who were handpicked by King James

I in 1604 to translate the Bible. William Barrick notes that along with the use of the best Greek and Hebrew manuscripts available at those times, earlier use of English translations and Bible commentaries were also used by these men. These men were divided into six groups. Each individual in a group translated the same portion of scripture, examined it, and submitted it to the rest of the group, who then deliberated on the best translation. As and when a book of the Bible was completed, it was handed over to the other groups to review it. In case there were any disagreements, these were addressed by the leaders of each group. It's no wonder that this version is one of the most loved versions of the Bible to date. The KJV Bible has been the most popular Bible for the four centuries since it was published, but translation work has continued to make the Bible accessible and readable to as many people as possible. The Bible is simply the best-selling book in the planet, year after year!

Bibliography

1. Barrick, William. *Understanding Bible Translation: Bringing God's Word Into New Contexts*. Michigan, Kregel Academic and Professional, 2019.
2. Barton, John. *A History of the Bible: The Book and Its Faiths*. Zaltbommel, Van Haren Publishing, 2020.
3. *ESV Bible*. Illinois, Crossway, 2018.
4. *KJV Bible Giant Print Full Size Black*. New York, Macmillan Publishers, 2020.
5. Lightfoot, Neil. *How We Got the Bible*. 3rd Edition, Revised and Expanded, Michigan, Baker Books, 2010.
6. Sumner, Tracy. *How Did We Get the Bible?* Ohio, Barbour Publishing, 2009.

“Enemy” is Made “Friend” if We Expect to Die In Case Jesus’ Coming Tarries?

Via A Run-Through
of I Cor. 15

Rev. Dr. Duke Jeyaraj
counters the Claims
of Cult Pastors who
teach Immortality
on Earth by quoting
a verse from that
chapter which labels
death as ‘the last
enemy’

DUKE JEYARAJ

“The last enemy to be destroyed is death”, so writes Apostle Paul (I Cor. 15:26). Using this verse as a proof-text ‘Immortality on Earth’ cult preachers and pastors say that believers in Christ need not have to experience earthly deaths ever and those who expect a normal death are befriending what the Word of God clearly calls ‘enemy! What is the full story concerning this?

One needs to read the full chapter – I Corinthians 15 - to understand that Paul did not ever want his reference to death as “the last enemy” to be taken to mean that there will be no death for the believer. One needs to only revisit the full chapter – I Corinthians 15 – to gather that one is not befriending what God calls ‘enemy’ by assuming believers will die natural deaths, if the coming of the Lord tarries!

Let me show you how: Till verse 7 of this chapter, Paul talks about the key elements of the Gospel. One such element is the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:4). From verses 5 through 8, Paul talks about the people the Alive Again Anointed One, Jesus, appeared to. In verses 9 and 11, Paul issues a personal note about how hard he worked enabled by the grace of God to preach the Gospel which has to have the mention of the resurrection of Jesus! From verses 12 through 14, Paul is upset that there are some who claimed that there is no resurrection of the dead while mentioning why it is important to believe that Jesus rose from the dead.

From verse 15, Paul starts to talk about dead believers. J. B. Philipps renders verse 15 in a way we can easily grasp: ‘For if the dead do not rise neither did Christ rise’. But the fact of the matter is this: Christ rose from the dead, and one day, dead believers will rise again.’ This is rehammered in verse 16. In verse 17, he writes that “we are still in our sins” if we do not believe in the resurrection. I am reminded of Paul’s words in Romans 6:3-4 where he says that a believer needs to rehearse his identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus in order to overcome sin in his life. A believer needs to say, “My old body of sin is buried along with Jesus who died for me on the cross. Now, I am spiritually resurrected as a new person just as Jesus literally rose again from the dead. I will not return to the same old sinful habits

my old body and self once enjoyed, before I died with Christ and rose again with Christ!" A person cannot live in victory over sin without spiritually identifying himself with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus!

In verse 18, Paul talks about "those who have fallen asleep in Christ" (ESV). He was talking about dead believers here! This is the **FIRST TIME PAUL TALKS ABOUT BELIEVERS DYING** in I Corinthians 15. We understand from Paul's words here that it was very common for believers to die in the Early Church! Paul assumes believers will die here! Paul did not believe in immortality on earth for believers! Paul's point was this: if Jesus did not rise from the dead, then believers who died also will not rise from the dead and will not be ever seen again! But Jesus did rise from the dead and believers who died will rise again one day!

It is at this time, Paul makes this famous statement: "If it's only for this present life that we have put our hope in the Messiah, we are the most pitiable members of the human race" (I Cor. 15:19 in the New Testament for Everyone Version).

But the good news is this: Christ has indeed risen from the dead! Paul calls Christ rising from the dead as the part of the "firstfruits" (verse 20). Believers who are dead rising from the dead will then be the "later fruits"! (This can be understood when we read verse 20). This is the **SECOND TIME PAUL TALKS ABOUT BELIEVERS DYING IN I CORINTHIANS 15**.

Paul goes on to talk about the contrasting effects that Adam and Christ have on us in the next few verses – verse 21 and 22. In Adam we all die and In Christ we all will rise again from the dead. Paul assumes believers will die (have a spiritual and natural death, if the coming of the Lord tarries). This is the **THIRD TIME PAUL TALKS ABOUT BELIEVERS DYING IN I CORINTHIANS 15**.

In verse 23, Paul clearly teaches this: Only after the Second Coming of Jesus will believers who are dead be resurrected from the dead; their resurrection will be the later fruit, while the historic resurrection of Jesus is the 'first fruit'. In John 5:29 and I Thessalonians 4:16-17, the Bible teaches that when Jesus returns, dead believers will also be resurrected. In John 5:29 dead believers are called "those who have done good" and in I Thessalonians 4:16-17 they

are called the "dead in Christ". Prophet Daniel predicts a day of resurrection of the dead in Daniel 12:2. Instead of saying that believers will not die, the Bible says that even though they may eventually die, one day they will be resurrected. Paul clearly makes this event after the return of Jesus in two places – one here in I Corinthians 15:23 and two in I Thessalonians 4:16-17.

After Jesus returns, He will start to rule the earth in a way He has not already done – Paul talks about this in I Corinthians 15:24,25. It will be at this juncture that all of Jesus' enemies will be put under the feet of His Father, Paul writes here. Revelation 20:9-10 talks about the defeat of the Devil and his forces and their consignment to eternal hell, an event that takes place after the return of Jesus (mentioned in Revelation 19:11 and the reign of Jesus mentioned in Revelation 20:1-8). But one enemy will remain, the last enemy, which is death. Paul talks about this enemy in I Corinthians 15:26. In the New Heaven and New Earth which Jesus will inaugurate after the Second Coming, death will be finally defeated and there will be no more death (Rev. 21:4). People in hell won't die – they will be tormented forever (Rev. 20:10). People in heaven won't die – they will praise God forever! In this way, death the final enemy will be defeated!

In I Corinthians 15:29 Paul talks about the unbiblical practise of baptising dead people which some followed. They believed in the biblical doctrine of resurrection of the dead. That is why in desperation they baptised the dead hoping that through this ritual the dead person will be saved and when resurrected will come to heaven instead of going to hell. Their practice of baptism for the dead is wrong because there is no chance for salvation after death (Heb. 9:27). But their belief in the resurrection of the dead is right. This was Paul's point in I Corinthians 15:29.

Next in I Corinthians 15:30-32 Paul says he was ready to take extreme risks while doing the ministry – he stared death on the face – because he knew that even if he got killed in the process, he would rise again. The 'beasts at Ephesus' whom Paul fought (verse 32) could be a metaphor for false teachers in Ephesus as Paul had the habit of comparing false teachers to animals (he called the false teachers

operating in Philippi as dogs in Phil. 3:2). Here for the **FOURTH TIME PAUL IMPLIES BELIEVERS CAN DIE**. In I Corinthians 15:32b Paul says, if there was no resurrection of the dead, he would be only be busy in two activities: over-eating and drinking alcohol! The implication is this: there is resurrection of the dead so Paul would rather be busy in risky ministry.

In I Corinthians 15:33-34 Paul warns the believers of the church in Corinth about intimate association with folks who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Why? What they believed impacted their behaviour. They often got drunk because they believed once they died, they simply stopped existing. There was no resurrection of the dead for them and a life in eternal hell thereafter for them. So they lived a life of indulgence.

In I Corinthians 15:35-41 Paul answers the specific question of the gang that did not believe in the resurrection from the dead: "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" In verse 36 for the **FIFTH TIME** in I Corinthians 15 **PAUL ASSUMES THAT BELIEVERS WOULD DIE (UNLESS THE RETURN OF JESUS PRECEDES)**.

Paul, next, talks about immortality only after talking about **DEATH THAT WILL COME TO BELIEVERS FIVE TIMES!** In verses 42-43, Paul writes that dead believers will one day be resurrected and be given an imperishable body. Till that time, the believer's body is prone to growing "dishonour" and "weakness" (Paul's word pictures for fading beauty and failing health); the believer will eventually die and be buried, a process Paul calls "sowing" (verse 43). Paul talks about this process elsewhere as well: "...our outer nature is wasting away..." (2 Cor. 4:16). He calls our bodies as "tents" that would collapse (die) one day only to be re-erected in heaven (2 Cor. 5:1).

The Immortality on Earth false teachers ignore the fact that Paul has already talked about the possible death of believers five times in I Corinthians 15 and go on to latch onto the latter half of I Corinthians 15 to teach that believers in Christ will not have to die on this earth at all. It is a clear case of taking a text out


of context. It is a clear case of twisting Scripture to teach hell-populating false teaching. I say hell-populating false teaching because, as Paul warned in I Corinthians 15:32-34, wrong beliefs about what the Bible says about death and resurrection from the dead will lead to sinful behaviour; and if this indulgent behaviour persists without repentance, it will take the person who believes these lies to hell.

In I Corinthians 15:50-54 Paul talks about the only possibility of believers becoming immortal even when they are on earth. This will happen if they are around when the trumpet sounds,

and the dead will be raised. The only time this will happen is during the Second Coming of Jesus as Paul clearly spells out in 1 Thess. 4:16-17, something that Paul already referred to in I Corinthians 15:23. Sadly, the Immortality on Earth cult pastors say that the trumpet call referred in I Corinthians 15:52 does not talk about the Second Coming of Jesus. This refers to the preaching of a new generation in the church, a preaching that teaches we can be immortal now, even before the Second Coming – they say quoting an irrelevant Old Testament verse. They are wrong here.

Immortality on Earth is a cult group that teaches believers in Christ need not die if they choose not to die. They twist I Corinthians 15 and especially the verse printed above from that chapter to bring this teaching. Dr. Duke Jeyaraj counters this through a run-through of this chapter.

Why do I say that? Here is why: According to I Corinthians 15:52, the dead will rise when the trumpet sounds! Have all dead people been resurrected after they heard these cultists preach, "You can be immortal here and now"? Absolutely not! As I mentioned, these dead people will only be resurrected when Jesus returns (see I Thess. 4:16-17). Revelation 20:13 says on the final day of the Great White Throne Judgment every dead person until that point in history will be resurrected and judged. Even if they were drowned in the ocean to their death (remember Malaysian Airlines MH 370, remember Osama Bin Laden's burial?), their bodies will be reunited with their spirits and they would be judged. Post that judgement is the consignment of people whose names are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life into hell, called the lake of fire here (Rev. 20:15) – a place already occupied by the False Prophet, the



This essay is my offering of ‘five loaves and two fish’ against the cultic Immortality on Earth teaching which has followers even in Chennai! - Duke Jeyaraj

Antichrist (Beast) (Rev. 19:20) and Satan (Rev. 20:10). This event follows the “noisy” (surely the sound of the trumpets adds to all this noise, I believe) public return of Jesus (see Rev. 19:6).

You have a choice: to believe in the lies of the cultic pastors who teach that “unless a generation rises up which believes that we will be immortal and won’t die a physical death, JESUS WILL NEVER RETURN!” Or you can believe in the plain teaching of God’s Word that Jesus will return and only post that, will a life of immortality be ushered in.

Let’s wrap up this survey of I Corinthians 15 against the backdrop of the immortality on earth cult by turning our attention to the last few verses of this chapter. Paul writes that post the sounding of the trumpet, which in turn means the Second Coming of Jesus, there will be a time when “death is swallowed” (eradicated) and won’t be able to “win” over anyone anymore (physical death will not be the experience of anyone) (verses 54,55). Yes, there is no death in heaven. There is no death in hell as well! This way death is “swallowed up in victory” (I Cor. 15:54).

You need to read I Corinthians 15:56 in different versions to understand it: “It was sin that made death so frightening and law-code guilt that gave sin its leverage, its destructive power...” (MSG); “Sin came into this world, and death’s sting followed. Then sin took aim at the law and gained power over those who follow the law” (Voice). “Death gets its power to hurt from sin, and sin gets its power from the Law” (GNT).

If Adam had not sinned, death would not have been part of human existence. After introducing Jesus as the Second Adam, Paul writes that we have borne the image of Adam (I Cor. 15:44-49). Yes, as Adam died following sin, we will also surely die one day (should the coming of the Lord tarry), because just as Adam chose to sin, we too choose to sin. In this sense, “the sting of death” is caused by sin

as Paul writes in I Corinthians 15:56. Another trigger for sin is our effort to be saved by following the law without the enablement from the Lord and the Spirit. This can be frustrating. In this scenario, the Law will only seem as the enabler for sin! That is why Paul uses the phrase, “the power of sin is the law” (I Cor. 15:56). In Romans 5:20 and Romans 7:7-11, Paul presents the law of God as a sin-enabler for the person who wants to follow the Law without a relationship with Jesus Christ. He makes the same point here, without giving adequate space for explanation because he is confident that the believers of Corinth will pick this up. So, the message of I Corinthians 15:56a is this: death would not have even come in the first place, had we not sinned like Adam. The message of I Corinthians 15:56b is this: the law which defines what is sin and what is not sin, and the law, which at times, lures some desperate people trying to get saved by following it, to sin, would not have been even given, but for our choice to sin! I Corinthians 15:56 describes two aspects of a torrid life devoid of a relationship with Christ: (1) It is a life that heads to a hopeless grave and to hell beyond; (2) It is a life of trying to obey the law with a self-righteous spirit but instead finding yourself going deeper into the hole of lawlessness and inequity.

I Corinthians 15 does not end in a despondent note. Verse 57 begins with the word, “but” (ESV), and the message is this: through a living, daily relationship with Jesus we have victory over sin; by a life of abiding in Christ, we are given power to obey the Law on a consistent basis! I Corinthians 15 ends with a call to be “steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain” (verse 58). In the same chapter, he talks about how he did the “work of the Lord” by putting his life in risk (I Cor. 15:30-31), fighting with beast-like false teachers (I Cor. 15:32). We too must follow suit! In fact, this article is my way of fighting false teachers!

A “Creative” Porn Watching Excuse Expunged

In a web series show, a young man and a young lady is seen driving in a cab. They do not know each other. They are strangers. The girl overhears a phone-call that comes to the boy. The young man gets a call from a hospital. He is told to give his semen sample so that his sperm can be frozen in a lab. The girl can seem to bear the silence in the cab.

The girl starts: “See, I was not eavesdropping. Your phone volume was really high... This is a taboo topic. Talk about it. Be a sport...”

The young man replies, “I am”.

The girl continues, “So how do you do it?” The boy is puzzled and shoots back, “Do what?”

“Nothing...”, the Girl says with a face smirk.

“No. You ask me...”, the young man asks.

“How... How does it work, you know? Porn and Stuff...”, asks the Girl.

“I have my favourites!”

“Really?”

The girl names some world famous porn stars.

The young man retorts, “No, they are too mainstream!”

Then he goes onto name six porn performers who are not as famous as the porn stars named by the girl.

The girl puts her hand over her mouth in surprise. And then ask, “How can you do this? Okay, Tell me the names of 10 Central Ministers?”

The young man figures out the girl is teasing him and shoots back a “Hello?”

“Cute! I like the way you humanize the porn stars you named. You respect them as human beings! I really like that! Great!” says the girl.

The cab journey continues as does their discussion.

So, the question is this: if you take care to

remember the names of all the porn stars you watch naked, does not make you, “great” and “cute” (as this girl put it)? What would God say about this view-point?

When you see the nakedness of someone who is not your spouse, desirously and deliberately, then you “despise” that person. This is the Bible’s teaching. Listen to the words of Prophet Jeremiah in this regard: “Jerusalem sinned grievously; therefore she became filthy; all who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; she herself groans and turns her face away” (Lam. 1:8).

Well, you may remember a pornstar’s name, however obscure she is! But when you see her naked, you still despise her, as she is not your wife! This is Bible Truth! Breasts of the porn-stars are usually exposed in porn. But the Bible is clear, it is an husband’s prerogative to enjoy a unhurried view of a woman’s breasts. This is made clear twice in Song of Songs. Read Song of Songs 4:5. It goes this way: “Your two breasts are fawns” (ESV). He repeats the same in yet another hymn he dedicates to the woman’s bodily beauty (in 7:3). The Bible is clear that this man is able to call the woman he sees naked as “bride” (see 4:8,9,10,11,12). In the English Standard Version of the Bible the woman he sees naked is called bride in five times in five verses (4:8-12)! The message is clear: only married people can see each other naked and celebrate that nakedness using metaphors the usage of which can be adequately explained by the user! The one the husband in Song of Songs sees naked is his “love” (4:1) whom he also called “noble daughter” (his princess, 7:1). Since a porn-star is not your spouse, remembering her by name, does not absolve you of the guilt that comes when you watch her deliberately naked!

Therefore, let not ‘creative excuses’ passed out subtly by web series shows weaken our resolve to say ‘no’ to porn-watching!

You can read the 10 Virgins Story in Matthew 25:1-13. When I read this parable, I learnt some things. May I share them with you?


“Five of them were foolish, and five were wise” (Matt. 25:2). I sometimes feel that I lack wisdom. But then, if we go to God and ask for wisdom, He gives us wisdom and makes us wise (James 1:5).

“The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep” (Matt. 25:5). You must work in the Kingdom of God while getting ready for the return of Jesus. Instead of sleeping, we must be busy sowing.

The wise virgins said “no” to the request of the foolish virgins (see Matt. 25:9). In this parable, the wise virgins said “no” in a kind way when the foolish virgins asked for oil to trim their lamps. Being wise doesn’t mean you always say “yes” to anything and everything. Instead you become a fool when you say “yes” to all the requests made to you – especially to requests made by bad friends.

“And the door was shut” (Matt. 25:10). That reminds me that I should learn to be punctual. If I do not, some doors will shut on my face! But the main takeaway for me here is that you’ve got to be ready for Jesus’ coming which can take place any-second. After Jesus returns, there will be no time to repent. So we must repent now and live a holy life. (My dad keeps saying this and I learnt that what he says is in line with what the Bible says here). There should be no procrastination when it comes to getting ready to meet Jesus! Even the ‘first night’ can afford to wait for married couples (Joel 2:16), but praying the sincere prayer of repentance cannot wait (Joel 2:17).

Lastly, we must follow Jesus’ methodology here. He could have simply said, “Get ready for my return which can happen anytime, folks!” But instead, He conveyed the same message using a gripping story, a powerful parable. We must emulate this - His perfect example when it comes to sharing the Gospel and God’s Word. We can wrap these around contemporary events, interesting stories, etc.

A woman with long dark hair is shown in profile, looking down at a glowing paper lantern she is holding with both hands. The scene is dimly lit, with the light from the lantern illuminating her face and the paper. The background is dark with some out-of-focus light spots.

What I Learnt from the 10 Virgins Story

DATASHA DUKE

My Second Chance



“I Grabbed My Second Chance and I Am a Witness For Jesus in My Second Home – Netherlands!”

ENOCH RUFUS

My name is Enoch and I'm residing in The Netherlands for a few years now with my wife and a beautiful daughter who is nearing her 2nd birthday. Hailing from a traditional Christian background, I was a Sunday churchgoer in my school days. I graduated from Karunya Institute of Technology (Coimbatore) and my first real encounter with the Gospel was here, rather through a dramatic sequence of events.

The Scripture illustrates God as a Shepherd who though has 99 in the fold still chases after the 1 who is lost. I nearly missed death in the year 2007. I overheard my doctor instructing the ambulance driver to take me to a vascular surgeon in 30 minutes whereas the nearest such hospital was an hour away. That 45-minute journey to the hospital gave

me time to reflect upon my faith very seriously. When God gives you a second chance, what do you do?

Romans 8:28 says, “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.” I live in a country where material needs are almost always met. Of the 17 million people here, hardly anybody would go to bed hungry. Your medical needs are taken care of for both the rich and the poor. Sex and drugs are hot commodity and are infact turned into tourist attractions. How do you share the good news in this place?

I truly believe and trust that God has ‘planted’ us here in this country for a purpose. We started a prayer fellowship with five people which has now grown into 20 plus. We are also involved in ministering to young children and teens at church. But the most strenuous and emotionally taxing ministry we are involved in is helping the refugees. We covet your prayers. Duke anna and family are very dear and close to our hearts. My understanding of Scripture, spiritual maturity and dealing with emotional issues of teens are much shaped and moulded through their ministry. God speed. Let God alone be glorified.

(It was Enoch who first alerted Duke about the cultic teaching of immortality on earth when it was still brewing among certain young ministers of the Gospel; Enoch was there in a camp for Corporate Pros in Bangalore when Duke and Evan preached there; this camp was organised by the fellowship to which Enoch gave leadership to along with a group)



In Europe, Sharing The Message of Hope!

An Orphaned
Lonely Refugee,
Now Blessed &
Serving Jesus
in Holland!
The Ajanthan
Puthisingam Story
in His Own Words

I was born in a middle-class family in Sri Lanka. My family consisted of my parents, me and my older sister. My mom died when I was six. My dad passed away when I was about 14. My sister and I grew up in the home of my periamma (mom's elder sister) who chose to not get married. She presently lives in Sri Lanka. My elder sister married a German man and left to Germany. I was alone in Sri Lanka. I was there till the age of 28. Though I was born in Jaffna, I grew up in Colombo. I worked in a five-star tourist hotel. There were a lot of problems in Sri Lanka and I also felt lonely. The war situation made it all the more grim. My sister did not want me to live in Sri Lanka. So, she invited me to Germany. I somehow made my way to Holland and requested that I be considered as a refugee. But that request was rejected by the Holland authorities. I had to seek other options for survival. So I went to Switzerland where my uncle stayed. He was a man with a born-again experience. I was 30 at that time. He shared the Gospel with me, someone who belonged to another faith. I did not accept the Lord immediately. However, I believed that Jesus was the true God. But I did not commit my life to Him, yet. I would just smile politely whenever my uncle talked about Jesus but did not give my life to Him.

I applied for a refugee status in Switzerland. But my application was rejected. The police came early morning, one day, in the accommodation for refugees I was at in Switzerland, and broke this news to me: "We have rejected your refugee request. You need to go back to Sri Lanka. Or go back to Holland from where you have come! You cannot stay in Switzerland!" I told them that I would prefer to go back to Holland.

Meanwhile, during my brief stay at Switzerland, I attended the church which my uncle attended! The pastor there, Pas. Paul Sargunam of the Philadelphia Church, was very friendly and warm towards me. I just loved being around him! Until that point, I had met several 'Christians' whose behaviour pushed me away from Jesus, but this pastor was different! The Holy Spirit was working in my heart, through the life of this man of God, slowly but surely! Eventually I came to a point where I had a strong personal faith in Christ! Though I was from another faith, I was convinced that Jesus was the Way, the true

God. I went ahead and voluntarily removed all visible marks of my previous religious faith on my body, like the sacred thread. I also removed pictures of the gods I used to worship, kept in the places I stayed. But I was not baptised in water yet. Nor did I tell anyone at that point that I was a believer of Christ.

When I was in this spiritual state, the Swiss police sent me packing from their country. I was being sent back to Holland! But I knew if I went back to Holland, it would be a jail-like existence for me there. I would not be allowed to go outside the accommodation I was given. I was in a fix because my sister spent nearly 25,000 euros and brought me to the Netherlands (Holland). Though I worked and gave her back the money, I dreaded the option of even thinking about going back to Sri Lanka. What would I do there in Sri Lanka? Would all the loneliness return? These thoughts worried me a lot. With all these worries, I landed in Holland from Switzerland after two plus years there. I had no money in my pocket. That's how my life began again in Holland.

At this juncture, my elder sister wanted to fix my marriage. There were many Sri Lankan Tamils from my previous faith in Germany. She was keen to plan an arranged marriage for me with a girl from that community. Since I was not allowed to move out of the premises ear-marked for the refugees, only my photo was sent to the girl's family. They matched our horoscopes, star-signs, etc., as per our old religious tradition. My elder sister informed me that a family in Germany was willing to give their girl to me in marriage. The plan was that I go back to Sri Lanka, marry that Sri Lankan Tamil German and come back to Germany using a valid sponsor visa. My loving elder sister had planned all of this keeping my future well-being in mind.

But since I was a believer by then, following my encounter with Jesus in Switzerland, I did not want to be 'unequally yoked' in obedience to the command of Scripture. So I rejected this marriage proposal. I certainly did not want to marry a girl who was not from my newfound Christian faith in a ceremony which was part of the faith I had given-up to follow Christ! I was ready to go back to Sri Lanka and live there! I did not also want to marry someone whom I could love from the bottom of my heart in the one life I had – a fellow believer in Christ! I did

not want to get married for the sake of money or for the sake of an opportunity to live in a comfortable foreign country! Even if I had to live in a small hut without modern amenities, I wanted to live it with a girl whom I loved who was also a passionate follower of Jesus as I was! This was my Scripture-driven conviction! My elder sister also did not force me to marry the girl she chose for me from Germany.

At that point in time, from my jail-like accommodation in Holland, I made a phone call to the pastor who led me to the Lord in Switzerland. He told me this: "I believe that within 45 days, you will be allowed by the Holland government to come out of your refugee jail; at that time, go to a good Tamil church nearby in Netherlands. And in that fellowship, God will give you a believer wife!" I could not believe what he said, I told myself, "Pastors usually speak words of encouragement like this!" But I also prayed to the Lord the best way I knew how, as a baby believer. I said, "Lord, I am not able to believe these words. But I would be very grateful to you if you can do a miracle for me. I want to get out of this jail soon!" I was overjoyed when within 45 days I was let out of that jail just as the Pastor told me I would be! It was indeed a big miracle!

I was given an apartment accommodation following my jail exit in Holland. That coming Sunday, I saw that believers came to the same apartment where I was put up to take people who were willing to join them to their local Church. I was only too happy to hop on to their vehicle. After all, the Lord had done an amazing miracle for me by bringing me out of jail in Holland. In that Tamil Church in Holland, I met one of the elders. He began to relate with me as a loving older brother. After some time, he told me this: "If you are considering marriage, I would like to introduce a godly believer girl I know from this church to you." I told him, "I need to like the girl you are talking about and I want to make sure that she is a believer." Then this loving elder introduced me to the girl he spoke about. As the days went by, I had a peace about this marriage proposal when I prayed. Then I got to meet this girl's parents and siblings. Within six months, the marriage took place. Things moved forward fast after this! After the wedding, I went to Sri Lanka and came back to the Netherlands.

The Lord indeed did a great miracle for me, a miracle the magnitude of which I could not fully comprehend! He was merciful to me, a person who lost his parents early; God was gracious to me, someone who felt all alone in Sri Lanka, whose immediate family, lived far, far away in a foreign country!

I started to grow in the Lord even more after marriage. My wife truly loved me. Her love empowered me to iron out my imperfections. I too love her deeply and have a calm assurance that it was God who brought us together and knit our lives together. God has blessed us with two beautiful daughters! We get involved in the ministries of our local church! The Lord has blessed us abundantly, I can say that! My wife serves as a Tax Advisor. God has blessed me with a simple, humble job as well. God has been good to us! I lead in worship and

share the Word of God whenever I get the opportunity.

The Word of God I listened to on the aspect of overcoming temptations by Duke Jeyaraj annan via Youtube helps me as I, as a foreigner and exile, engage in an ongoing battle to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul (as Apostle Peter exhorts us to). As we read, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free," I am being set free in a progressive manner! I know that is the testimony of many others who come under Duke annan's sin-liberating Bible messages! The Lord has blessed us and we are able to be a blessing to other ministries as well in an increasing manner! All glory to Him!

Like The
Christmas
Wisemen
You Too....
(Ministry
Brief
Accounts in
Summary)

The Christmas wisemen "opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11) and liberally gave it to the Christ-Child. You all, open your purses, and sacrificially send offerings to our ministry, the Grabbing the Google Generation from Gehenna Mission (G4 Mission), as we try to do what we can to present Christ to the Google Generation. We remain grateful.

Let us first talk about some things we were able to procure after responses to the needs paragraph from the previous issue. A dear brother who lives in India sent-in Rs.3 lakhs for our car-fund. Another fellowship in which Duke has ministered in multiple times based in an Indian city sent Rs.1 lakh. Another 2 lakhs was added through contributions from Evan's family. Rs. 70k was the remains of the 1 lakh that Duke's college-mate based in an Indian city sent for the two wheeler bought in January 2022 (another family had sent Rs. 75k for the total expense of Rs.104k for that). A Hyderabad pastor friend gave, Rs. 50k. We sold some gold to bring upto Rs. 7 lakhs. Bank of Baroda was kind to give us a personal car loan for Rs. 7 lakh. We added both, that is added Rs.7 lakhs+Rs.7 lakhs, and got a Hyundai Creta EX Manual Transmission (the second variant) for our ministry's use. The EMI for the 7-year loan comes to Rs.10,911/-

Also, thanks to the giving of Rs.150k from a Indian family we could give the 13 inch M1 Macbook Pro 256GB laptop we already had to Vikas Yadav, a Uttar Pradesh Pastor's son who is also our parttime worker and our main go-to video-edit man. We replaced it with a 16 inch M1 Macbook Pro 512GB laptop which came to Rs.167,500/- taking advantage of a Republic Day iPlanet store offer. God is good!

What follows below is what we did with the offerings that we received from Feb 2022 to Feb 2023 (13 months): Magazine Printing charges (all-pages all-colour for the first time) - Rs.46,000/-; Internet Charges - Rs. 16490/-; Refreshments while at work - Rs. 6000/-; Mobile Office Rent (Starbucks) - Rs.12,000/-; Phone & Communication Charges - Rs. 34,000/-; Salaries of G4 Mission Staff: Rs.7,00,000/-; Rent for Ministry Base and Related Charges - Rs. 4,29,000/-; Outstation travel and related expenses - Rs. 25,000/-; Dispatch of Mission Resources to partners, subscribers and buyers - Rs.20,000/-; Local Transport and Vehicle Maintenance - Rs.52,000/-; Ministry Volunteer Gifts and Honorarium - Rs. 35,000/-; New Macbook AppleCare+ & Accessories: Rs. 47,000/-; Website Renewals and new purchase for dukewords.com, purposenmeaning.com, dropbox, icloud, MS office, canva, antivirus, youtube premium for youtube channel, zoom, Kahoot - Rs.120,000/-; Christian Literature purchase - Rs.10,000/-; Raw Material for writing, preaching, mag - Rs. 17,000/-; Office Furniture and Furnishings - Rs. 10,000/-; Book Reprints (Print-on-Demand) - Rs. 30,000/-; Offerings to other servants of God and ministries - Rs.160,000/-; Printouts - Rs.6000/-; Creta Car Accessories - Rs.32,000/-; Re-print of Dhoni-wala tract - Rs.9500/-; Kahoot Quiz Winners Gifts - Rs.35,000/-; Auditing of G4 Mission accounts - Rs.11,500/-; New 16-inch M1 Macbook Pro - Rs.1,67,500/- Grand Total of all expenses from Feb 2022 to Feb 2023 (covering 13 months of operation) - Rs.20,29,990/- If you are led to support this ministry use information on page 3 of this magazine. Or WhatsApp Duke at 91-8886040605.

A Witness for Jesus in Norway

The Ragul Story

“Only One life; It will soon be past;
Only what is done for Christ will last!”
So wrote C.T Studd.

I am Ragul. I was brought up in an orthodox family from another faith since my childhood. When I was 12 years of age, my parents were invited to a prayer fellowship by some believer friends. As a family we were going through many tough situations at that time. As we attended that prayer fellowship, God started working. We were able to understand the love and power of God. But as a teen, I did not get the full picture of who the True God was. This would happen later.

I did a course called bachelor's in mechanical engineering, and it was at college that I started reading the Bible. Hunger for the Word of God gripped me day by day. I started understanding the truth about Jesus as I kept reading. I was 17 when I finally gave my life to Christ.

In the year 2010, I completed my Engineering course. I had to wait long to get placed in a job. But God was faithful and blessed me with a job in far-away Norway! I moved to Norway in 2011 and started working in a multinational company! Moving to a new country at the



tender age of 22 was very challenging! On the other hand, I was hungry for Christ and I wanted to grow in Him and build His kingdom among the lost in the country God took me to, thanks to my job!

At the beginning, I was shocked when I saw the spiritual condition of Norway and other neighboring countries in Europe! Though one can spot a lot of impressive church buildings, we hardly see young people in the church services in this nation! What I saw bothered me and challenged me! I asked God, “Why did you bring me here?”

I started going to a Norwegian church in the city I lived in. All the church services were only in the Norwegian language. As I prayed, God helped me to connect with the people. Soon I had some believer friends in town!

As days and years pass by, I wanted to do something for God in this place! Then God opened the doors for me to share and witness in youth groups and in a few churches in the town I lived. During 2015, we had started house fellowship, with some youth from the

city joining in. It was going on well.

But at this time, I struggled a bit with loneliness. This slowly led to depression. I was unable to concentrate in my work. I started to get severe headaches and in October of 2015, I was compelled to resign my work and move back to India.

When I moved back to India, things became even more worse. I was diagnosed with clinical depression. Things were hard. For almost two years, I was under treatment. I was prescribed heavy anti-depressants by the doctors. I also struggled with suicidal thoughts. The headaches and sleepless nights continued. I used to get body pains on one side. Soon I supplemented sleeping pills along with the anti-depressants! My parents were very worried as I became very unstable in mind and health.

But God never gave up on me! After two years of this battle, God did a miraculous work in my life! He completely rescued me from this darkness. A new chapter began in my life! Deliverance from suicidal thoughts, depression and headaches, happened!

During my bouts of depression in India, I would think that I would not have a good

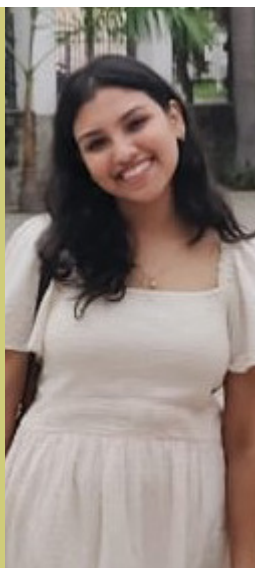
future anymore! But God once again opened the door for me to return to Norway! This was indeed God's work! Trusting on His promises and words, I moved back to Norway in 2018. The Lord brought me back to the same city and to the same company – would you believe it? And He lifted me up from then on! God opened the doors in many churches for me to witness about what He has done in my life. After my marriage, my wife and I serve God together in Norway. God had put a burden for young people and churches in this Nation! God is connecting me with the younger generation of this nation and today we have house fellowships, prayer meetings and God is truly building His kingdom! "The One who called is faithful, and He will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

(Ragul was in Karunya University when Duke and Evangelin ministered there in September 2009. After the meetings, Duke sold/freely distributed the earliest version of his book, Straight Talk. It was in a xerox, spiral-bound format then. These books were bought by some students and were later distributed in the hostels. It reached Ragul's hands as well. Down the line, Ragul connected with Duke requesting suggestions for his youth ministry in Norway which Duke was too happy to give).

TESTIMONY

"My friends fought to get *Straight Talk* from Me After I Finished Reading It!"

Kezia Atarah
Ambrose,
III Year B. Sc.
Nursing, CMC,
Vellore.



Straight Talk is a wonderful book on many issues that are usually hushed-up and rarely spoken about in Christendom. But these taboo topics are spoken about very liberally and without any inhibitions by the people in the world today. Adolescents gain wrong understanding about these aspects of life and fall into habitual sins. The book personally touched my life in not only answering questions of right or wrong but also shed light on how to utilize God's Word in a practical way. I remember how my friends fought to get *Straight Talk* from me after I finished reading it. They too had burning questions that were unanswered and the book's title itself attracted many. The book will definitely be a blessing to many struggling adolescents and youth around the world as it definitely was to my friends and myself.



Pursuing God's Call!

The Story of Gladia D. Sidney Peter

I was born and raised up in a Christian family and privileged to be a pastor's kid. My parents were dedicated to the Lord's work and established a church in Hosur, Tamil Nadu. They were also very keen to pass on many spiritual disciplines to me and my two older sisters, for which we are very grateful. Devotion, prayer time, a pure lifestyle and attending church were areas of no compromise. As a result, I also settled into the routine and I was doing everything traditionally to be a good Christian and also to stay out of trouble. However, at a certain stage I really began to question why I was doing what I was doing. I was troubled that Christianity was being just a religion for me when instead I wanted it to be a real personal relationship.

I began my studies in Jyoti Nivas College in Bangalore and began to face personal challenges, which pushed me closer to God. During this time, I recommitted myself and began to pursue God for who He is, not merely because I was born into a Christian home. As I continued to enjoy a steady relationship with God, I was part of a church in Bangalore called Intouch Fellowship where I began to be active in different teams. My local pastors identified the Lord's calling upon my life and invested in me. I was pursuing my Bachelor's degree in Commerce at that time, and through my college I got to do an internship in an investment bank for two months.

However, I felt a strong urge to pursue my calling for ministry. Amidst the fear and confusion around me, I firmly decided to pursue my Masters in Divinity from Southern Asia Bible College (SABC) in Bangalore and

prepare for full-time ministry. I began my studies in SABC from June 2015, and it was a unique experience for me. There were people from different backgrounds and places which broadened my perspective about cultural differences, language barriers and life experiences. It was a humbling period for me as I had to understand people and work with others by giving up my own ideas and comforts.

Campus life was busy with activities on my schedule from morning till night varying from singing in the chapel, attending classes, finishing up assignments in the library, to participating in other extra-curricular activities. By God's grace, I was able to find balance and do well in my academics and made memories with friends, which I cherish.

It was during my study at SABC that I met my husband who was also pursuing his degree in ministry. He was in his final year when I joined the college. He was a gifted worship leader and one of our enthusiastic leaders. We were also part of the choir and so over a period of time we began to talk and got to know each other. We felt the need to pray and take a right decision about the future of our lives. God was gracious to us and at the right time we both received a confirmation to pursue our relationship towards marriage. However, we waited for two years as I still had to finish my Master's degree. It was in March 2018 that I graduated and we got married three days later.

The Lord brought me to Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, where my husband was already pastoring a church called Vizag

Christian Assembly. The church welcomed us warmly and ordained us to pastoral leadership. This was a transitional period for us and the church, and therefore, we had to learn to take things slow and not introduce any major changes. We got to know each and every family member and individuals, which led us to intentionally serve them in different aspects.

As we continued to minister, the Lord blessed us with a baby boy named Silas Josiah Peter in September 2020. Life changed in so many beautiful ways for us, but in the midst of all the changes, I have time and again experienced that God is a Perfect Parent.

It has been four and a half years for me with our church community and the Lord has used me to lead worship, preach the Word and actively work with the women and youth department. I am personally involved in counselling and mentoring young people who are at different crossroads. Along with that, I am also involved in leading the women of our church to be effective kingdom women who please God and live as exemplary wives, mothers and working professionals in their

respective fields. I am also currently pursuing my MBA in the area of Human Resourcing from Amity University.

There are so many uncertainties ahead of me and also for us as a family, but we are absolutely hopeful that the Lord who called us is able to carry us through every season. We want to remain humble before the Lord, obedient to His Word, excited to do His work, and available for people. Thank you, Dr. Duke and sister Evan.

[Duke Jeyaraj and Evangelin Duke first met Pas. Gladia in the event, Single But Not Alone, an event that Heartshakers of ElShaddai organised on 14 February 2015. She was a student of SABC, Bangalore, then. It has been the privilege of Duke and Evan to minister in the Vizag Christian Assembly where Gladia and her husband serve from the mid-2000s, thanks to the multiple warm invitations of Rev. Anita Aidinyantz].

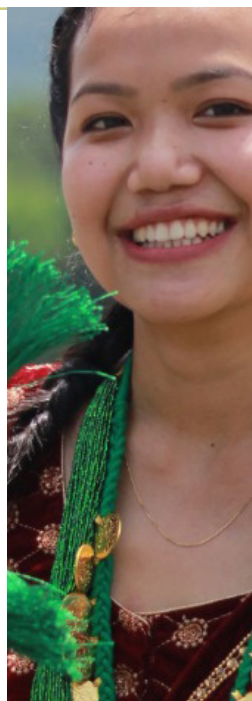
TESTIMONY

Hi, I am Sapna Shris from NEPAL. I am a 4th year medical student in Pokhara, Nepal.

I received this book *Straight Talk on Hushed Up Matters* on my birthday from Aunty Annie James, who is the Head of the Missions in Rupaidiha, a town in Uttar Pradesh, not far from the India-Nepal Border.

The topics this book covered personally for me were very interesting and captivating. I felt that every chapter in this book was speaking directly to me. Many of my doubts and questions related to these issues were answered after reading this book. It's fascinating how the author has boldly portrayed the real issues that our present generation is facing and what the Bible has to say about it with rich and contextual illustrations.

I am happy and grateful to have come across this book and hope that this book reaches out to youths across the globe so that their doubts and queries pertinent to these issues may be cleared.



"I am from Nepal and the book *Straight Talk* was a blessing to me!"

Sapna Shris,
Final year Medical Student in Nepal.

God Moved Me from My Mumbai Comfort Zone to Belgium!



Priscilla
Devasahayam
tells her story

Hello, I'm Priscilla Devasahayam, working as a Software Engineer in Brussels. I'm from Mumbai, working in one of the top Indian IT firms and currently living in Brussels, Belgium.

When Duke uncle asked me to share about my journey from India to Belgium, I couldn't say 'No' as this journey was a miraculous one and something for which I will always be thankful and grateful to God.

Being born and raised in a strong Tamil Christian family, reading the Bible, daily prayers, attending church and participating actively in all the church activities were a part and parcel of my life. Despite that, there were times when the storms of life hit hard, times when I felt like nothing good will ever work for me, times when I got angry with God, times when I turned and walked far away from Him. And yes, there were times when I eventually lost sight of God's plan for my life. But God was gracious and never let me go. He reminded me of His word in Isaiah 55:8, 9 - "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

In 2011, when I was in the second year of graduation, my Dad passed away. It felt like a blow that hit us really hard and we felt it would be impossible to recover from that loss. I couldn't focus on anything. I wanted to know why God allowed this to happen and how we were going to cope with it.

Now when I look back, I'm surprised on how miraculously God comforted us and helped us through those tough times. My elder sister and I took up part-time teaching jobs along with our studies to help our family become financially stable. Many of our relatives and church friends supported us in ways we could never imagine! And that is when I realized that our Lord is the Jehovah-Jireh, our Provider in all circumstances.

I found it very difficult to focus on my studies and was always worried about my future. But my Lord had amazing plans for me. Even before my final year results were declared, the Lord enabled me to get selected for an interview at Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). On the day of the interview, I had severe sore

throat and during the second round, I was unable to speak. As my sore throat got worse, my hopes of getting into TCS was done and dusted. But God granted me mercy and grace in the eyes of the panellists. And they allowed me to write down the answers to all the questions they asked me. I had lost hope and thought I had failed for sure. But miraculously, after a week, I received the offer letter from TCS! And that was the start of an unimaginable future that the Lord had graciously prepared for me.

It has been almost 9 years now and in my professional journey, the Lord has poured His grace upon grace, every single day. The day I received my offer letter, the Lord reminded me of the promise that He had made to me earlier through Isaiah 55:8,9.

For 4 years, I was in the same project, receiving good ratings during appraisals, having great colleagues to work and hang out with! I never considered moving out of Mumbai as I was accustomed to the Mumbai life. In Mumbai, I was in my comfort zone. Whenever I occasionally would think of moving out of the project, I would be scared as I feared how my future would be. This made me lose sight of the bigger plan that God had for my future.

In 2018, God put me in a situation at work that opened my eyes and made me realize that it is high time for me to move out of Mumbai and look for better opportunities. That phase allowed me to experience His presence in new ways, strengthened my faith and helped me overcome my fears. Then I joined a new project in TCS which would be operational in a completely new location. I was supposed to learn new technology to work on this project. I was required to put in a lot of time in learning. It made me step out of my comfort zone and brush up my knowledge and put it to better use. By God's grace, everyone in the new project was quite happy with my progress.

Within a month, I was asked to apply for a visa and plan for a short business trip to the European country of Belgium. It might sound very strange, but I did not even have a passport at that point in time. I had once applied earlier but it had to be cancelled due to some reasons, so I had never tried applying again. Also, travelling abroad was never on my list as it was something I never expected to

happen. This opportunity came as a surprise to me. I was overjoyed and praised God for His grace and favour and for giving me this opportunity. I was confident that if it is God's will, He will help me get the passport on time and help me travel. Even when everything felt impossible, God's unfailing love and grace made every single thing possible for me. Within few weeks, I received my passport and travelled to Brussels – my first ever international trip. Through all the fears, God encouraged me with His word from Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

The business visit and our client demo was a huge success and I could feel God's guidance and leading every single day. Stepping out of my comfort zone and submitting to God's plan by trusting Him and allowing Him to remove all my fears and worries, made me get closer to Him and enjoy the abundant blessings He had in store for me. During this trip, I also got the opportunity to visit one of the wonders of the world – the Eiffel Tower. It was a dream come true.

Over the next few months, I was invited twice for business visits and the Lord was gracious every single time. I realized that God's plan for my life was far greater than what I could have imagined and He helped me realize that day how important it is to take that step of faith and trust Him with our future. His gracious hand is always with us and we should never be worried about what our future holds as we know the One who holds our future.

Later in 2019, I received the opportunity to travel to Brussels for a long-term visit. We prayed about it and submitted it in God's hand and finally raised my work permit request in October 2019 and received it in March 2020. But by the time I received it, the Covid19 lockdown had started and my visa processing was put on hold. It was a little disappointing but I felt the grace of God even in that situation as it would have been very difficult for me to stay alone and away from family during the lockdown situation. Later, once the situation was back to normal, I raised a visa request in October 2020. I received my visa but due to changes in the international travel rules during Covid19, I was asked to postpone my travel

and by the time I could travel again, my work permit had expired. I started having some doubts again that maybe it isn't God's will for me to work overseas! But I didn't want to rush into any wrong conclusion and waited for the Lord to lead me and give me clarity about the future. There were times when I wanted to quit and thought of changing my job but my mom, sister and brother-in-law encouraged me to wait patiently as this would be a good opportunity for my career and would help me grow. They were supportive in every situation and kept me from losing hope.

As per God's plan, in April 2021 I received my new work permit and visa and was all set to travel. However, on the day of travel, I was requested to postpone my travel again. I was very disappointed and unable to understand why things were not working as I expected but I prayed in my heart and thought of discussing with another senior manager and God granted me favour and grace in his eyes and they told me to continue with the travel as planned.

The journey from India to Brussels was challenging and full of unexpected waiting period but this waiting period was the most helpful period of my journey. Through it, God prepared me for what was ahead, He strengthened me spiritually and I got closer to God. My faith was strengthened and renewed, I could feel His goodness and understood that He is still working on me and for me. Trusting in His decisions and not leaning on my own understanding made God's plan for my life to happen. He has enabled me to visit around 10 countries so far, explore many new cultures, meet new people and spread His love. Every time I travel and visit a new country, I feel so grateful to God and humbled that He chose me

and raised me to this position.

After arriving in Brussels, for the initial few weeks, I was unable to find a church where I could actively be involved. Since there was another lockdown, I was worried that this huge change in my life should not affect my spiritual life. That is when suddenly, I saw one of Duke uncle's poster on Facebook regarding the Park yourself in Mark Kahoot Quiz – an online Bible Quiz his ministry, the G4 Mission conducted. I loved the concept of Kahoot Quiz and started preparing well for the quiz. It was a great learning experience and that helped me spend more time with God's word. I also started joining the other online Zoom events of Uncle Duke's ministry: Fountain of Tears against Mountain of Fears prayer, Month-end Midnight Prayers. I also joined a church and fellowship in Brussels where I am actively involved now. Also, I volunteer in designing posters for Duke uncle's programs and made it a point to prepare and take part in every Kahoot Quiz. I wanted to make sure that I do not compromise the time I spend with God and for God wherever I am and want to use my talents for the Lord wherever possible.

My journey from waiting on God helped me focus on the purpose and direction for my life according to God's will. It felt very hard to wait patiently and hold on to faith especially when I felt it would have been a simple problem for God to fix. However, we should never give into our fears when we're tired of waiting. God always shows up. Always. That too with plans we can never imagine, and when you least expect Him. Therefore, let us keep believing and He will give us the strength and grace to keep going.

TESTIMONIES

"Thank you for sending me the book, *Daniel In Dell*. I cannot adequately explain the wisdom, the corrections, and convictions I received when reading that book. It is a must-read book for every believer who is starting out in the workplace!"

**a church
volunteer saved
from another
faith writing from
Hyderabad via
WhatsApp.**

**a CEO and
Christian
book author
living in
the USA via
LinkedIn.**

"Keep ploughing ahead Duke! You are a rare utensil God utilizes on this earth!"

God Gave Me A Historic Government Job!

Sunil Babu shares
his testimony



Praise Lord!!! My name is Sunil and I am happy to share this testimony. Through this testimony I would like to glorify God alone.

I had been preparing for the prestigious Civil Services Exam since I completed my graduation as my heart longed to be a part of the Indian Bureaucracy. However despite few attempts I could not clear the exam. This demoralized me. One fine day, the Holy Spirit directed my attention to the book of Joel after Duke *Anna* prayed for me over a phone-call. He prayed for the restoration of precious years that I had lost in the course of preparing for the Civil Services exam. Since then, what Duke *Anna* prayed for me, became my prayer as well: "Lord restore back to me, the locust-eaten years, please!" Joel 2:25 reads this way: "I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locusts. It was I who sent this great destroying army against you."

I kept on attempting different Government sector job selection exams, and one day the Lord blessed me with the service I longed for!!! I was selected to the Andhra Pradesh High Court Service to serve in the Judicial Wing. I joined the service in the month of July 2022 and was put on a probationary period. It was the first ever direct recruitment done for the AP High Court in its entire history. I was blessed by God to be part of less than 100 candidates who were selected. I was simply overwhelmed upon seeing my name in the final selection list. In fact, I never expected that I would be in the final list in lieu of the heavy competition. It was God who blessed me with this job after listening to my humble prayer for restoration inspired by Prophet Joel!

**a young
woman
writing via
WhatsApp.**

"Your talk in Shiloh 2022 on Overcoming Tech Temptations really helped me a lot, Duke sir."

**a young man
writing from
Mumbai via
WhatsApp.**

"Thank you uncle Duke, for the Romans Kahoot Quiz you conducted over Zoom today. It was the first time I was taking part. Was able to have a lot of key takeaways while at the same time enjoyed the one and half hour. Looking forward to the next."

OUR MINISTRY'S PRESENT NEEDS

(1) An office-cum-residence base in Chennai (2) As Duke uses an iPhone 13 mini as a portable office, an iPad mini will be a useful bigger screen companion for allied work.

“People Died In The Beds Near My Mom’s Bed In The Hospital. But God...”

Sunny Karumanchi shares his testimony

Sunny Karumanchi, who lives in the USA working with a top corporate company, is a key media volunteer of G4 Misson



It was the year where Covid hit our country with a new variant called Delta and my family was affected very badly. When my mom and I tested Covid positive on April 24th, 2021, we thought that we would get out of it after 14 days like many others did. We thought home quarantine would take care of it. But when on the 14th day, my mom found it difficult to breathe. I was worried.

As suggested by doctor, we rented an Oxygen Concentrator and started using it for my mom. It was a time when finding a bed in hospitals for admission was next to impossible. It was also the time where the number of deaths because of Covid increased rapidly. When one of the private hospitals agreed to admit my mom, we wasted no time in admitting her. Before the hospital staff took my mom into her assigned room, they checked her pulse and it was frighteningly low at 69! At that time, this hospital told us to take my mom back and get back home as, according to them, my mom was a high-risk case.

We have never felt that helpless ever! We did not know what to do! My relatives and friends were trying their very best to find a bed in any available hospital. At the same time, my dad, my sister and my wife also tested Covid positive. That night was so grim with my mom in a very serious condition.

The very next day miraculously God opened a door for us - a bed in the government

hospital in Guntur. Immediately, we went there and waited outside a big hall where a host of COVID patients were admitted. The hospital staff moved my mom to a bed with an oxygen mask. We saw people dying right next to my mom’s bed night after night. We witnessed three or four deaths each night! I was there in the hospital to take care of my mom. I would sleep in the floor near my mom’s bed in that Government Hospital. People not too far away from me would breathe their last. **But God** had mercy on my dear mom. In that scary situation, God gave us strength and courage. Our pastor friends, our evangelist friends, relatives and friends, all prayed for us and gave us moral support.

During that time the Lord miraculously gave us the availability of Remdesivir drug for mom’s use. Her pulse started becoming gradually normal. And on the 14th day, she got discharged from the hospital. The Lord’s miracle-working hand made this happen! He lifted us from what was a death bed and laid us on green pastures.

During the same time, my wife who was affected with Covid, travelled to her home in Vishakhapatnam along with our 1-year-old daughter. God has showed us countless mercies. During this time, my daughter, my mother-in-law and my brother-in-law remained unaffected by the marauding virus. This work of God is unimaginable in our lives. I thank God for His great love!

Dear Bro. Duke, Firstly, congratulations on all your publications and thank you for being a guide and a mentor to many of us from all over the country. I was introduced to *The Days of Your Youth* by my sister who also happened to work with you during your corporate days (2006). She started bringing the magazine home every month. I was very young when I started reading your magazine, maybe around 14-15 years old. I was surprised to read about bold topics, often untouched and not spoken about. It definitely caught me by surprise and also caught my attention while learning more about what the Bible has to say about purity, selecting a life partner and so on. As I began reading, I personally loved how you would connect sports, ongoing local and global issues and how all of us could learn a thing or two. The stories you share are amazing. I also loved seeing pictures of your core team and all the team behind the scenes. The magazine served as an important tool for educating and teaching all of us to live a life centered around Christ. I just want to say Thank You for all that you do!



'Your Mag Touched My Life When I Read it as a 15 Year Old! And the Impact has Stayed On!'

Sharon Marikili

a medical doctor writing from Andhra Pradesh via WhatsApp

"Dear Duke sir, your message on finding where to serve God and among who from Acts 16 deepened my understanding!"

a senior citizen writing from Hyderabad via WhatsApp.

"I listened to your message which you shared with medicos in CMC Shiloh 2022 on Overcoming Tech Temptations. I saw the response to your altar call. Giving an altar call is important, but it is missing these days. I forwarded your message to many preachers on my WhatsApp!"

a senior citizen writing from Hyderabad via FB Messenger .

"Bro. Duke, you preached a missionary challenge message from Amos quoting Ida Scudder Story in the year 2002 in the New Life AG Youth Camp in Hyderabad. My daughter was truly challenged. She came forward during the altar call. She went on to become a doctor, a gynaecologist. She now serves God in a mission hospital."

"Evangelin Duke's article, *When Failing to Plan Actually Works*, published in Issue 40 of your magazine, *The Days of Your Youth*, really encouraged me and enabled to think how miraculously God works in my life. I was working in a MNC and quit my job and now I serve as a pastor in a town in Tamil Nadu."

a young man writing from Tamil Nadu via WhatsApp.



This Was A One-Of-A-Kind Bible Quiz Which Got Us Hooked!

Timothy Deepak Paulraj talks about his experience in participating in our monthly Kahoot Bible Quizzes Over Zoom

We were first introduced to the Kahoot Bible Quiz organised by G4 Mission through a Whatsapp message forwarded to us by one of our relatives. We eagerly registered, partly because we were curious. But halfway through the quiz we had to drop out as our kids were getting upset over not being able to participate along with us. That's when we (my wife Amreetha and I) challenged our kids to prepare for the next quiz so they could participate with us.

Our oldest daughter, Sahana Adisaya, who is 7 years old, immediately got on to the challenge and started to prepare. She finished going through the Gospel of Matthew in a few days, and eagerly participated in the next quiz. Our second and third daughters, Arpana and Rakshana, who are 5 and 4 years old, wanted to team up with us and participate. The Audio Bible has been useful for the little ones to go through as many chapters as possible.

We were thrilled when we realised the Quiz conducted by Duke *anna* focussed on bringing out biblical truths rather than on recollecting plain facts. We had never seen a quiz like this before. This kept us engrossed and hooked. We decided to try our best and participate in every quiz as the Lord enabled us.

We are grateful to God for the encouragement and opportunity He gave us to read the books of Matthew, Ruth and Daniel and for the truths God has taught us through the quiz. Specially, the questions that highlight and warn against cult teachings and questions that counter our culture have been valuable.

One specific question on Daniel after which Duke *anna* emphasized the importance of taking a stand in the workplace right at the start is significant and memorable for us.

We hope and pray that through the quiz many young adults would continue to grow in the understanding of God and His Word. Our heartfelt thanks to the quiz master Duke *anna* for the diligence and efforts taken to make this quiz a world-class experience.

Lastly, we would like to encourage anyone who is hesitant to participate, to just log on for one of the quizzes even if you haven't prepared. We assure you that it won't be wasted time.

Ministry Report

See Evangelin Duke sharing the Gospel with a Commercial Sex Worker in Chennai (below). This has become an ongoing ministry.

God graciously used Duke Jeyaraj inside IIT Chennai. He shared the Gospel with first year students during Christmas 2022. We ministered in several such programs organised by other churches, parachurch organisations, Bible Colleges, Corporate Fellowships during the year that went by.

We had our own Zoom meetings each month with different focus. One Zoom meeting was called Question Thirst Quenched Truthfully

(QTQT) - a live Q n A time where Duke provided brief, to-the-point Bible answers.

We gave tracts in strategic points of Chennai regularly. We counselled youth and young pros who approached us.

Duke wrote for Aim magazine of EFI (each month) as well as for Christian Trends mag.

We opened a Tamil Instagram page featuring Duke's Tamil messages (@tamiltalkingduke).

Duke travelled to Nepal to speak in a church and in a youth camp in 2022 and saw amazing times of commitment at the altar.



The Greatest Cup Final & The Most Important Goodnews of All Time

Poem written by Dr. Duke Jeyaraj on the 2022 World Cup Final between France and Argentina played on 18 December 2022

A first half without a single goal attempt - France started very slow

Messi and Di Maria made it 2-0 by Half Time said hello

With 10 mins to go for the final whistle, it was still an impeccable Argentina Show

But that's when Mbappe's late twin strikes, including a wow twitter-storm stirring volley, forced the game's length to thankfully grow

When Messi's extra time second-half goal came, it was party time again for the team in light blue and snow

But Mbappe's ice-cool, on target, penalty kick got France once again out of the certain defeat deep burrow

The score could have been 4-2 easily after Extra-Time First Half, but for the brilliant defending by Guinea Bissau-origin French Defender Dayot Upamecano

Randal Kolo Muani missed the opportunities of a lifetime in Extra Time second half to make it 4-2 for France and irreparably spoil Messi's final bow

As the match meandered to the penalty shoot-out stage, the tension was so unbearable you had a furrowed brow

Thanks to the gigantic Emiliano Martinez's goal-saving antics, France for the World Title, Argentina did barely manage to out-elbow

As Gonzalo Montiel scored, watching the match in India using Jio Cinema you could hear the Argentine fans in Lusail Stadium bellow

It was a sight to see Messi, like Maradona once was, being paraded on shoulders and posing with the trophy, with his wife and kids in tow

It didn't matter if you watched this final from one of the nine countries represented in the immigrants-overloaded French team or if you were an Argentine, brown, white or yellow

Or if you watched this goose-bumps giving game sitting in Glasgow or Lucknow

For many of us, this was simply 'The best game of football I have ever watched' (as Sunit Chhetri put it), a game that made our hearts, swell and glow

In his day of no error, Mbappe made it 1-0 in the penalty shootout, before Messi restored the status quo

But the Bible truth is all of us are full of errors, sins, blunders, and we rightfully deserve God's woe

Just as Mbappe wiped out Argentina's lead 2-0 in under 2 minutes, Jesus, the only God-in-flesh can wipe out your sin, right now, and make it go

Into the football pitch to comfort the disconsolate and disinterested Mbappe came Emmanuel Macron, France's Pharaoh

Jesus Himself came to our pitch to take our sin punishment - His back became like a field ran through by a crude plough

After Angel Di Maria scored, we saw Olivier Giroud blowing his nose - did he and teammates have a virus - as the press did incessantly crow

But the bigger and more important discovery would be this one: each one of us reading this - except Jesus - belong to the sinner row

After Angel Di Maria scored to make it 2-0, he flashed the love symbol with tears cascading down below

While as Jesus went to the cross, He demonstrated God's grand love even for us (us who are sinners though)

Come to Jesus in repentance and faith, and receive the joy which the most thrilling football match cannot give, a joy He alone can bestow

Mbappe was livid that he did not take a shot at the goal at the fag-end of extra-time, after dribbling into the Argentine penalty area somehow

And you could be livid with yourself on judgment day if you stubbornly choose not to come to Christ now

