

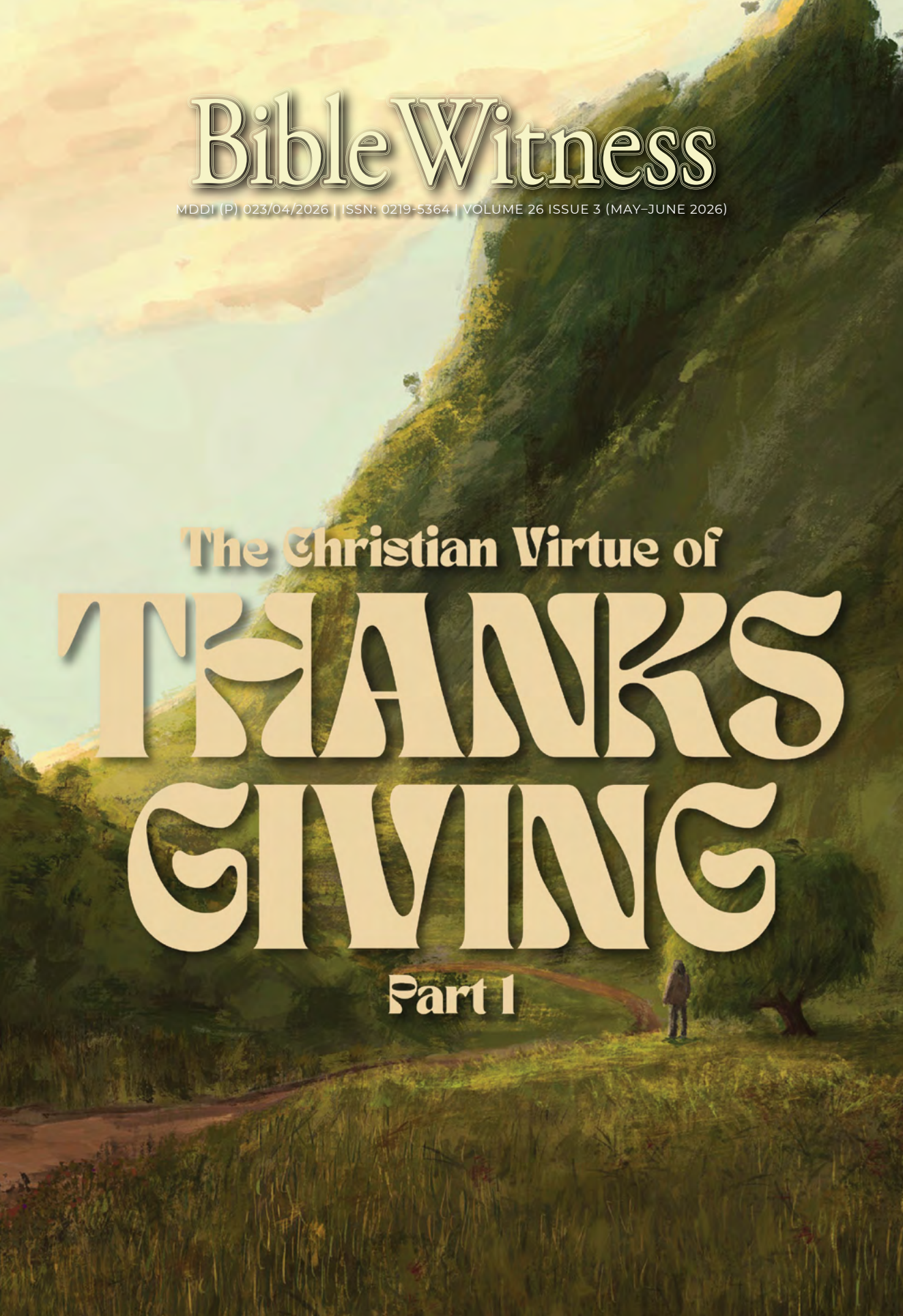
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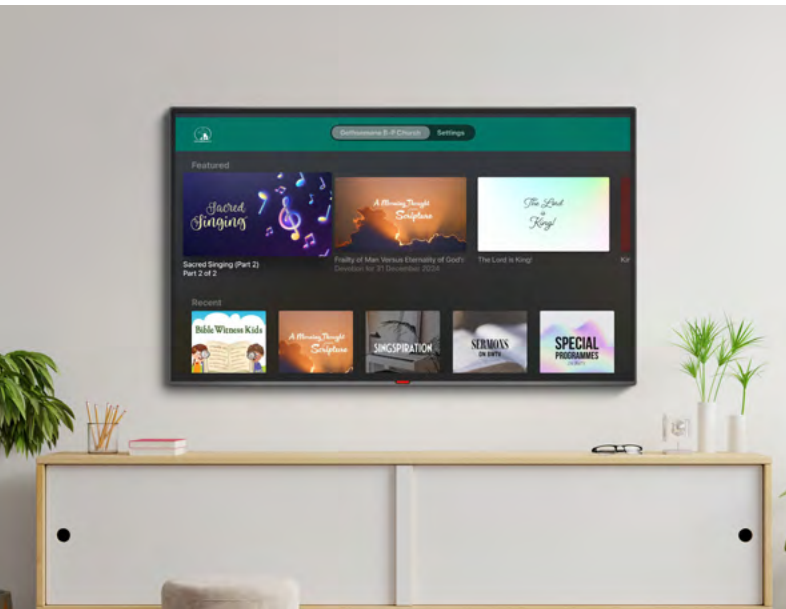
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The Christian Virtue of

THANKS GIVING

Part 1





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On the Cover ▲

"Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."—Acts 14:17



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EDITORIAL

Dear readers and patrons of Bible Witness,

Grace and peace of our Lord be with you abundantly.

We would like to bring to your attention two important matters for thanksgiving and prayer.

Bible Witness is Approaching its 25th Anniversary

Bible Witness published its first issue (July–September) on 24th June 2001. What began as a modest literature ministry has, by the Lord’s gracious providence, been sustained as a ministry of biblical witness through printed literature, digital media, audio, and video resources.

The upcoming 25th anniversary is not merely a remembrance of years passed, but a testimony to the faithfulness of God who has preserved and prospered this ministry through changing times, challenges, and opportunities. Throughout the past twenty-five years, the Lord has used Bible Witness to proclaim His truth, strengthen believers, defend sound doctrine, and encourage faithful Christian living among readers across many nations.

As part of our thanksgiving commemoration, we are organising a two-night lecture series on September 8–9, from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm, at the SingPost Auditorium, Paya Lebar, Singapore. Further details will be announced soon. We warmly and cordially invite you to attend these meetings as we gather in thanksgiving to the Lord for His goodness and faithfulness for the past twenty-five years.

As we reflect upon this milestone, we remember with thanksgiving the many whom God has used: writers, editors, proofreaders, translators, technical workers, distributors, supporters, and faithful readers. Behind every issue printed and every article published stand countless hours of unseen labour and sacrificial service offered unto the Lord.

Above all, we acknowledge that whatever fruit has been borne belongs entirely to God.

Pray for Our Assistant Editor

Our Assistant Editor, Pr Ho Kee How, has been severely incapacitated by a brain aneurysm and has been hospitalised for about three months now. This has been a deeply trying season for him and his dear family. We earnestly covet your continued prayers for the Lord’s servant that God, in His mercy, would sustain, strengthen,

and comfort him, and grant grace and peace to his loved ones as they care for him through these difficult days.

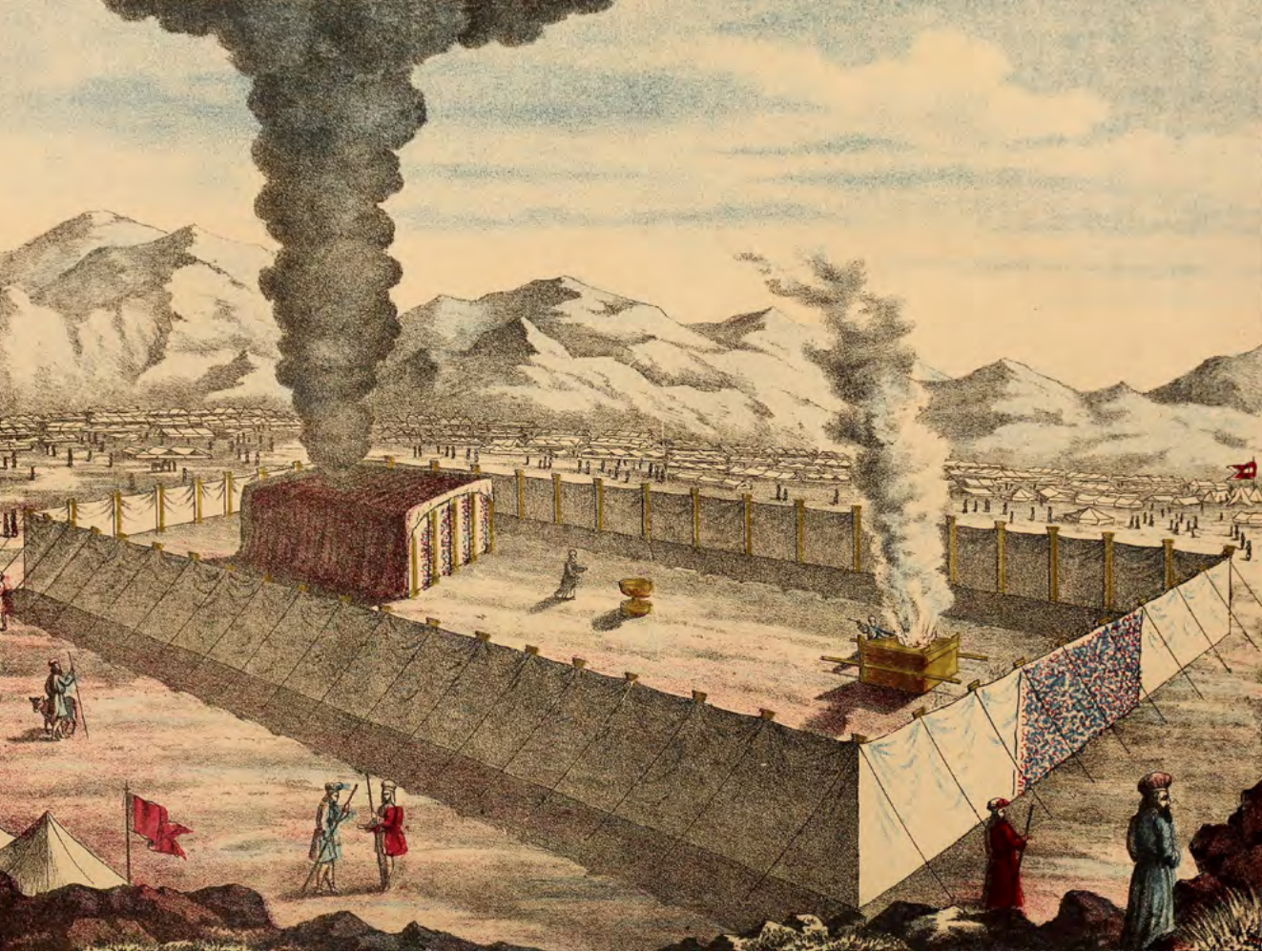
Over many years, Pr Ho has laboured tirelessly as a writer and editor, often serving day and night in the demanding work of Christian publishing and ministry. Through his careful, meticulous, and discerning efforts as a skilled editor, articles, books, and publications have been refined for doctrinal clarity, biblical accuracy, linguistic precision, and spiritual edification. Much of his labour has remained unseen by many, yet his faithful service has greatly strengthened this ministry and blessed numerous readers. In addition to his editorial work, he has also ministered God's Word through preaching in Gethsemane B-P Church.

Please pray that the Lord, according to His mercy, would grant healing, strength, comfort, and sustaining grace to Pr Ho and his family. Pray also for the rest of the editorial team as they shoulder additional responsibilities during his absence. We further seek your prayers for God's provision of an able individual with theological discernment, sound biblical convictions, and strong language skills to assist in this important ministry.

As we reflect upon twenty-five years of God's abundant mercies, let us not merely look back with gratitude but also look forward with renewed faith and commitment. The same Lord who has preserved and prospered this ministry through many seasons remains faithful still. May He continue to strengthen all who labour in this work, raise up faithful servants for future generations, and use every page, message, and witness for the glory of Christ and the salvation and edification of souls. To God alone be all praise and thanksgiving.

Finally, the main articles in this and the next issue of Bible Witness comprise extracts of sermons preached during the 27th Bible Witness Retreat (17th-19th March 2026) held in Kollam, Kerala, India, where God graciously gathered His people for spiritual instruction, fellowship, and encouragement in His Word.

Sincerely in His service,
Prabhudas Koshy



THANKSGIVING

The Believer's Proper Response

PRABHUDAS KOSHY

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name” (Psalm 100:4).

These words reveal that thanksgiving is the necessary response of God's redeemed people as they approach Him in worship. Thanksgiving is the essential posture of the soul that approaches God in worship. The psalmist portrays the

worshipper drawing near to God's sanctuary, not with murmuring, self-centredness, or indifference, but with a heart of overflowing gratitude.

THE GATEWAY TO GOD'S PRESENCE

The Bible provides a clear protocol for approaching the Almighty: “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name” (Psalm 100:4).

Thanksgiving is the proper approach to God because it acknowledges our place as creatures and His place as Creator. We do not wait for a change in feelings to offer thanks; rather, thanksgiving is the key that opens the door. By entering His presence with gratitude, we lay aside our self-importance and recognise that every breath we draw is a gift from His hand.

True thanksgiving also prepares the heart for deeper communion with God. A complaining spirit clouds spiritual vision, but gratitude softens the soul to worship, trust and obedience. Thanksgiving, grounded in the assurance that the Lord remains wise and good in all His dealings, lifts the heart above earthly anxieties and fixes the mind upon God's all-sufficient grace. Thus, gratitude is not merely the language of worship; it is the posture of a humble and believing heart before God.

A MANDATE FOR EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE

The command to give thanks echoes throughout Scripture. First Thessalonians 5:18 states plainly, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." This command does not mean that believers are expected to be thankful for evil, suffering, or sin. Rather, Christians are called to maintain gratitude in every circumstance because God remains sovereign, wise, and good even when life becomes painful or confusing. Biblical thanksgiving is not rooted in circumstances but in confidence in God's unchanging character.

It is vital to notice the word "in". We are commanded to give thanks

in everything, not necessarily for everything. God does not ask us to be thankful for evil or suffering. However, even in the darkest valley, we can be thankful for God's presence, His unchanging promises, and His sovereign care. This is not a suggestion; it is the revealed will of God for those who follow Christ.

This truth distinguishes Christian gratitude from worldly optimism. The world gives thanks only when conditions are favourable. But the believer gives thanks because he knows that God rules over every event for His glory and for the good of His people. Even in affliction, the Christian can say with Job, "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21). Thanksgiving, therefore, becomes an act of faith, a declaration that God remains worthy of praise regardless of changing circumstances.

A SHIELD FOR THE HEART

Thanksgiving serves as a spiritual defence. In Romans, Paul describes the downward spiral of a soul that turns away from God: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Romans 1:21).

Ingratitude is often the first sign of spiritual decline. When we stop being thankful, we begin to take credit for our successes and grow entitled. This pride leads to vanity and rebellious ways. Conversely, a thankful heart remains humble and obedient. Gratitude reminds us that we have nothing we did not first receive.

Thus, thanksgiving is a sentinel that protects us from the irreverence and ungodliness of the world. By abiding in this practice, we secure our hearts against the hardening influence of a worldly and unthankful generation. When a congregation gathers in thanksgiving, their shared gratitude creates a spirit of unity that resists the vain thinking of the world and fosters humility that binds believers together for God's glory.

THE WAY TO GLORIFY GOD

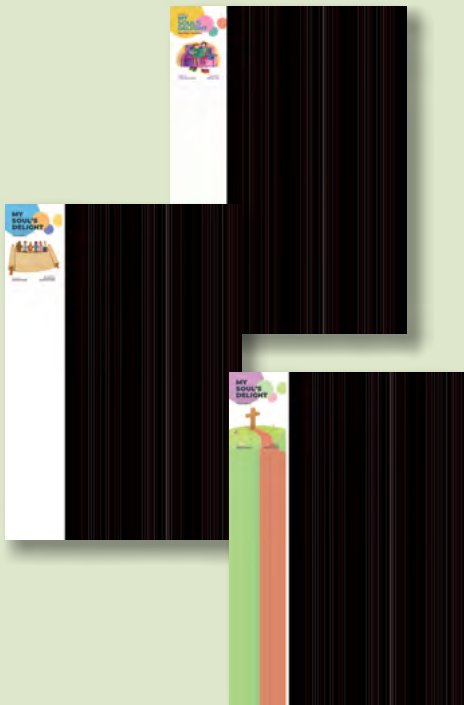
Ultimately, our thanksgiving is meant to magnify the character of God: "be thankful unto him, and bless his name". The Lord declares: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me" (Psalm 50:23).

When we offer praise, we "magnify" God, not by making Him greater

than He already is, but by making His goodness more clearly heard and seen by those around us. A thankful life is a public testimony of God's goodness. It tells a watching world that God is sufficient, His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures forever.

As we obey the call to be thankful, we find our hearts protected and our lives transformed into a witness for His glory. Let us resolve to enter His gates every day with a sacrifice of praise. ■

PRABHUDAS KOSHY is the pastor of Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church, and the Editor of Bible Witness Magazine.



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The Immovable FOUNDATION of Thanksgiving

PSALM 100:4-5 | PRABHUDAS KOSHY

While Scripture repeatedly commands a life of thanksgiving, few spiritual duties are more misunderstood. Many regard gratitude merely as a response to favourable circumstances, a fair-weather expression that thrives in prosperity but fades in adversity. Biblical thanksgiving, however, rests upon a far deeper and firmer foundation.

When the psalmist calls believers to enter God's gates with praise, he does not anchor thanksgiving in the ease of life, but in the unchanging character of God Himself. Psalm 100 points us to three eternal divine realities: the goodness of God, the mercy of God, and the faithfulness of His truth. These divine attributes form the immovable foundation of true gratitude.

Because God is eternally good, His mercy everlasting, and His truth unchanging, the believer is never without reason to give thanks. Circumstances may change suddenly—health, possessions, and earthly comforts may disappear. Yet God remains unchanged. His character never falters, and His promises never fail.

Therefore, thanksgiving is not ultimately a product of our environment, but a

response to the steadfast nature of God. Whether in abundance or affliction, the believer stands upon solid ground, able always to say, “Bless the LORD, O my soul” (Psalm 103:1).

I. THANKSGIVING IS BUILT UPON THE GOODNESS OF GOD

True thanksgiving begins not with our circumstances, but with the character of God. The psalmist declares in Psalm 100:5, “For the LORD is good”. The little linking word “for” is significant, because it gives the reason why believers are to enter God’s courts with praise and thanksgiving. We thank God because of who He is. Gratitude that rests merely upon changing situations will soon fade, but thanksgiving anchored in the unchanging nature of God will endure throughout every season of life.

God’s goodness is essential to His being. Scripture does not merely say that God does good things, though He certainly does. Rather, goodness belongs to His very nature. Psalm 119:68 declares, “Thou art good, and doest good”. God can never cease to be good, for goodness is intrinsic to His eternal character. Human goodness fluctuates, but God’s goodness is immutable. He remains good in prosperity and adversity alike, in days of rejoicing and in nights of sorrow. His goodness is not determined by our comfort, but by His own perfect holiness and love.

The goodness of God is also universal. Psalm 145:9 proclaims, “The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.” Every breath we take, every meal we enjoy, every sunrise that greets the earth

bears witness to divine goodness. Paul reminded the people in Acts 14:17 that God “left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons”. Even those who deny Him continue daily under the gracious provisions of His hand. The entire creation silently testifies that God is good.

Yet the goodness of God is revealed most gloriously in Jesus Christ. Romans 5:8 declares, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” The cross stands forever as the highest demonstration of divine goodness and mercy. God did not merely give earthly blessings; He gave His own Son for undeserving sinners. If God has given us Christ, then we possess an everlasting reason for thanksgiving.

At the same time, Scripture exhorts us to behold “the goodness and severity of God” (Romans 11:22). Believers must learn to anchor their gratitude not in favourable circumstances, but in God Himself. Habakkuk understood this profound truth when he declared, “Although the fig tree shall not blossom... yet I will rejoice in the LORD” (Habakkuk 3:17–18). Outwardly, the prophet faced loss, emptiness, and hardship. Yet he still had God, and that was enough. Such is the secret of true thanksgiving: when earthly comforts fail, the goodness of God remains unchanged, sufficient, and eternal.

II. THANKSGIVING IS BUILT UPON THE MERCY OF GOD

Psalm 100:5 continues by declaring, “his mercy is everlasting”. Here, the psalmist moves from the goodness

of God to the mercy of God, for true thanksgiving cannot exist where divine mercy is forgotten. The Hebrew word, *hesed*, translated as “mercy”, is a rich covenant term that speaks of God’s steadfast love, faithful compassion, and undeserved kindness towards His people. It is God’s lovingkindness that remains constant despite human unworthiness. Every genuine act of thanksgiving must therefore rest upon the believer’s continual remembrance of God’s inexhaustible mercy.

First, mercy is the reason we are not destroyed. Lamentations 3:22–23 declares, “It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning”. Often, believers thank God for visible blessings, which concern health, provision, family and opportunities. Yet they fail to consider the judgment that God has withheld from them. We deserve condemnation because of our sin, yet God is merciful towards us. Every day we live, being spared from His judgment, is by itself a testimony to divine compassion. Our continued existence is not evidence of human strength, but of God’s patient mercy.

Secondly, mercy is the very foundation of salvation. Ephesians 2:4–5 reminds us, “But God, who is rich in mercy... even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ”. Salvation does not arise from human goodness, effort, or merit. Spiritually, we were dead, helpless, and condemned. Yet God, moved by His abundant mercy, has given us life through Christ. Titus 3:5 reinforces this truth: “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to

his mercy he saved us”. The believer, therefore, stands eternally indebted to His mercy. Indeed, if God never granted another earthly blessing, redemption itself is sufficient reason for endless thanksgiving.

Furthermore, God’s mercy is everlasting. Psalm 136 repeats this triumphant refrain twenty-six times: “for his mercy endureth for ever.” Human mercy often fades, weakens, or fails, but God’s mercy never expires. It does not diminish with time nor become exhausted by its repeated need. Many believers lose their spirit of thanksgiving because they concentrate on what they lack rather than on the immeasurable mercy they have already received. But the Christian who remembers the pit from which he had been rescued will never lack gratitude. The deeper our awareness of divine mercy, the deeper and more enduring our thanksgiving will be.

III. THANKSGIVING IS BUILT UPON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

Psalm 100:5 concludes with these reassuring words: “his truth endureth to all generations”. Here, the psalmist leads us to another immovable foundation of thanksgiving—the enduring faithfulness of God. The Hebrew word, *’emunah*, translated as “truth”, carries a far richer meaning than mere factual correctness. It speaks of firmness, reliability, steadfastness, and covenant faithfulness. In the Hebrew mind, truth is inseparably connected to the certainty of God’s character and His unwavering commitment to fulfil every promise He has made or spoken. Thus, when Scripture declares that God’s “truth

endureth”, it proclaims that God remains eternally faithful to His Word.

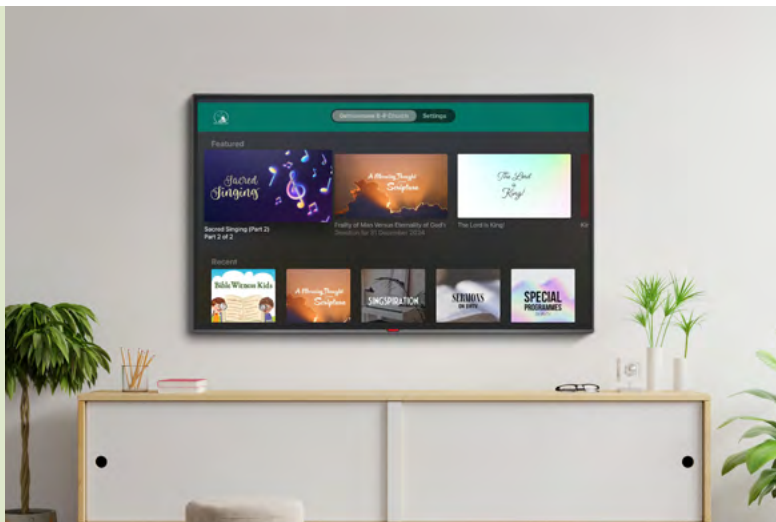
Certainly, God’s truth affirms that His Word is accurate, infallible, and incapable of error. Yet the psalmist’s emphasis reaches beyond doctrinal accuracy to the glorious reality that God never fails His people. What He has promised, He will surely perform. Numbers 23:19 declares, “God is not a man, that he should lie”. Human promises often weaken with time, but divine promises stand firm throughout all generations. Joshua testified near the end of his life, “There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken” (Joshua 21:45). Every word God utters will come to pass with perfect faithfulness.

This truth becomes especially precious because God remains faithful even when His people fail. Second Timothy 2:13 reminds believers, “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.” The Christian life will utterly collapse if it rests upon human consistency, strength, or reliability. Our hearts fluctuate, our faith weakens, and our obedience often

falters. Yet God’s faithfulness remains unshaken. The believer’s hope rests not on his ability to hold on to God, but on God’s unwavering power to hold him.

Moreover, God’s faithfulness extends through every generation. Psalm 100:5 affirms: “his truth endureth to all generations.” The God who was faithful to Abraham remained faithful to Moses. The God who sustained Moses upheld Joshua. The God who guided Joshua strengthened David and preserved all His prophets. The same faithful God empowered Peter, Paul, and the apostles, and He remains unchanged today. Hebrews 13:8 declares, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

Therefore, when circumstances become uncertain and fears arise, believers must remember that God’s promises are stronger than their anxieties. First Thessalonians 5:24 assures us, “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” Because God is faithful, thanksgiving becomes more than an emotional response to pleasant circumstances—it is a confident act of trust in God’s unchanging promises. ■



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THANKSGIVING & WITNESSING

GEORGE SKARIAH

INTRODUCTION

It is often said that true thanksgiving is thanks-living. This means that Christians are to live each day with a thankful heart. Such a heart overflows with gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ for all that He has done. The psalmist asks in Psalm 116:12, “What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?” The answer follows: “I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay

my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people” (vv. 13–14).

Through a life of thanks-living, we are able to impact the world around us. This means that as we live each day with a joyful heart, the joy of the Lord is manifested through our lives, and as a result, the lives of those around us are influenced. This is true Christian witnessing. When Jesus called the twelve disciples and entrusted them with the gospel mission, He told

them in Matthew 10:8, “freely ye have received, freely give.” Therefore, a witnessing life is one in which, through our lives, we freely and joyfully give to the world what we have freely received from the Lord.

WHY SHOULD WE WITNESS TO THE WORLD? (1 PETER 2:9-10)

The answer lies, in the words of the apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:9-10, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people . . . which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”

The apostle here contrasts the eternal destinies of unbelievers and believers. Unbelievers are appointed to destruction because they have not placed their faith and trust in the only Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ who is the divinely appointed provision of salvation for sinners (vv. 7–8). Conversely, those who believe in and trust the Lord Jesus Christ are, according to Peter, richly privileged by God's favour.

The apostle employs four striking phrases to describe the immense spiritual privileges bestowed upon God's believing people: “a chosen generation”, “a royal priesthood”, “an holy nation”, and “a peculiar people”. These expressions echo the language God used in the Old Testament to describe the special status of Israel (Isaiah 43:21; Exodus 19:5–6; Deuteronomy 7:6–7).

Thus, every believer is set apart by God according to His eternal,

covenantal love and sovereign purpose. In Christ, they are not merely rescued from judgment but are graciously constituted a people of great privilege and honour in His sight.

What, then, should be our responsibility in the service of God? The apostle Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 9:16, “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” Likewise, he exhorts in Romans 12:1, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Thus, every believer in Jesus Christ has a compelling and rightful obligation to serve Him faithfully. The Greek word translated “reasonable” (*logikos*) conveys what is fitting, rational, and spiritually appropriate. In other words, our service is not optional but the proper response to God's abundant mercies. All that we are today is “by the mercies of God”; therefore, a life wholly yielded to Him is both our duty and our delight.

HOW SHOULD WE WITNESS TO THE WORLD? (1 PETER 2:9; MATTHEW 5:16)

The apostle Peter says, “that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light”. The expression “shew forth” (*exangellō*) means to proclaim, declare, or publish abroad. In this verse, we are exhorted to announce widely who God is and what He has done, to His praise.

While *exangellō* is not identical to the Greek word *euangelion* (the proclamation of the good news), it carries a related idea of making something known openly. In this light, Christians are called not merely to possess the truth but to proclaim it, even to declare openly the excellencies, mighty deeds, and saving grace of God as experienced in their lives.

This means we are a “propelling” people. A propeller converts rotational energy from an engine into forward thrust, thus enabling a craft to move ahead. Receiving power from the engine, it drives the whole mechanism forward.

Christian witnessing operates in a similar way. Our strength is not our own; it flows from what the Lord has done for us. Having received His power and grace, we are moved to press forward, and in doing so, we declare to the world the mighty works He has accomplished in our lives.

This happens in two ways: First, we declare to the world the excellencies or the greatness of the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter says that we are to show forth “the praises of him” who has called us. These “praises” refer to the excellencies of Christ. The word used here is *aretē*, meaning “virtue” or “excellence”, and it points not merely to God’s attributes, but especially to His mighty and praiseworthy acts. Thus, we proclaim to the world the power of the Gospel by which Christ saves His people from their sins.

Christians have the distinct privilege of declaring to the world

the mighty power of Christ, revealed through the glorious Gospel—that even the most hardened sinner can be saved through the extraordinary work of redemption accomplished at Calvary. The apostle Paul affirms in Romans 1:16, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” As we ourselves have experienced the transforming power of the Gospel, our personal testimony lends weight and authenticity to our witness (1 Peter 2:10).

Second, we demonstrate to the world around us the goodness of the Lord in our lives. The Lord Jesus Christ says in Matthew 5:16, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Here, our Lord underscores the importance of a life marked by inward righteousness, produced by the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit. Having been clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we are to reflect this reality outwardly, so that our conduct bears witness to His transforming grace.

When the fruit of the Spirit is manifested in our lives (Galatians 5:22–23), what a powerful witness it becomes! In this way, we are made reflectors of the Gospel’s transforming power at work within us. The power of the Gospel is not merely to be professed but to be visibly expressed through our lives. Having been so richly blessed by this Gospel power, we must be ready to be a blessing to others through it. Thus, our guiding conviction should be: “Blessed to be a blessing!”

WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE REJOICE, THE WORLD TAKES NOTICE (PSALM 126)

The psalmist declares in Psalm 126 that when the LORD restored the captivity of Zion, His people overflowed with joy and thanksgiving. So evident was their rejoicing that even the heathen remarked, "The LORD hath done great things for them" (v. 2). Israel herself echoed the same testimony in verse 3: "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."

The captivity had been devastating. Under the Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar II, Jerusalem was destroyed and the glorious Temple built by Solomon was laid waste. Yet, after seventy years, God brought deliverance by raising up Cyrus the Great, a heathen king, as His instrument. This was nothing less than a divine miracle. The depth of their suffering only magnified the greatness of their deliverance; and greater deliverance called forth greater praise.

So powerful was their testimony that even the Gentiles confessed, "The LORD hath done great things for them." Likewise, when Christians live with joy and gratitude for God's mercies, their lives become a visible witness. The world takes notice, and hearts are influenced by such faithful testimony.

The psalm concludes with a promise: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (vv. 5–6). Faithful testimony through sowing the precious seed of God's Word will, by God's grace,

result in a joyful harvest: the winning of precious souls for His kingdom.

CONCLUSION

Only when the power of the Gospel is truly and genuinely experienced does our witness become sincere, effective, joyful, and enriching. We who are heirs of the true Gospel must arise with grateful hearts and faithfully fulfil the Great Commission through joyful witnessing.

The psalmist beautifully captures this vision in Psalm 67:1–7: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

Here we see the divine pattern: God blesses His people, not for self-indulgence, but that His saving way may be made known among all nations. As we rejoice in His mercy and grace, we are compelled to proclaim His salvation, so that the nations may come to praise Him. ■

GEORGE SKARIAH is the pastor of Covenant Reformed Church, Bangalore, India.



THANKSGIVING PRAYER

God's Remedy for Anxiety

CORNELIUS KOSHY

Anxiety is one of the common spiritual diseases that troubles the hearts of men. It is not confined to the unbelieving world. Christians, too, are often burdened with worry. Even sincere believers who pray regularly and serve in the church may find their hearts disturbed and their minds distracted by the cares of life. The Scriptures show that God's children are no strangers to fear, sorrow, and pressure, and they teach us how to bring such burdens before God.

THE DIVINE PRESCRIPTION

Paul's words in Philippians 4:6-7 are a divine remedy for anxiety. There we find both the prohibition and the prescription: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (v. 6).

The word "careful" here does not mean careful in the modern sense of being cautious or prudent. It refers to anxious care and prolonged worry, which distract and distress us. There is, of course, a lawful care that belongs to Christian duty. For example, a father must care for his family, a mother must care for her children, and a pastor must care for his flock.

Likewise, a believer must be diligent in his work and plan ahead. Carefulness in that sense is, in fact, responsible behaviour. Scripture never endorses carelessness or irresponsibility.

But there is another kind of care. We call it a sinful care, which causes an inward torment. This is the anxiety that burdens the heart and clouds the mind's judgment. Consequently, it weakens our service to God, and ultimately dishonours Him. Such anxiety does us no good. It crushes us beneath all our burdens. Our Lord addresses this in Matthew 6 when He said, "Take no thought for your life" (Matthew 6:25). He pointed to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, reminding us that the Father who feeds and clothes them will surely care for His children. Anxiety, at its root, is a weakness of faith. It grows when our trust in God's fatherly care declines.

THE ANTIDOTE TO ANXIETY

Paul gives us a clear antidote: "in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God".

First, we are to pray "in every thing". Nothing is excluded from the believer's approach to God. This means, every fear, burden, uncertainty, trial, temptation, family matter, health concern, ministry difficulty, and decision must be brought before God. We often pray about the large matters but neglect the small ones, until the small cares accumulate and become heavy burdens. When Paul says, "in every thing", it implies that there is no burden too great for God, and none too small for His fatherly concern.

Second, Paul says we are to come "by prayer and supplication". These words show us the proper approach. "Prayer" speaks of reverent approach to God. It includes our worship of Him and our devotion to Him. When we pray, we approach the Almighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the faithful Father, the One for whom nothing is too hard. Anxiety often grows because our problems become great in our eyes while God becomes small. When we pray, the right spiritual perspective is restored. "Supplication" adds a sense of earnest, particular pleading. Praying vague, mechanical prayers are not fitting for the children of God. We are to bring our burdens before God with sincerity and earnestness. We may tell Him plainly what troubles us. We may ask for wisdom, strength, grace, deliverance, patience, submission, and faith, with all sincerity.

Third, and most significantly, Paul adds, "with thanksgiving". This is the spirit in which our requests must be made. Thanksgiving should never be postponed until the trouble is over. It is to accompany prayer even while the burden remains. This is remarkable, and unlike what we are naturally inclined to do. In the midst of uncertainty, tears, and distress, the believer is called to pray thankfully.

We would realise that thanksgiving changes our heart even while it carries burdens within. It compels us to count present blessings and mercies instead of fixating on our present fears alone. It leads us to remember what God has already done, to recount His promises, and to steady our troubled hearts in His faithfulness. Anxiety causes us to look ahead and imagine a

possible disaster; a thankful heart looks back and remembers God's mercy in times past, refusing to think that God would abandon us. For example, an anxious heart asks, "What if God does not provide?" But a thanksgiving heart answers, "He has provided again and again, why should I doubt Him? The Lord hath helped me hitherto, and he will help me in the days ahead." We may say, "Lord, I do not understand this trial, but I thank Thee that Thou hast saved me. I thank Thee that Thou hast not left me. I thank Thee for past mercies. I thank Thee that all things work together for good to them that love God." Many believers do pray, but with agitation and anxiety, with complaint over current circumstances, or with fear of the future. Now, Paul teaches us to pray with thanksgiving.

THE CONTINUED USE OF THE REMEDY

Fourth, our requests are to be "made known unto God". Does God not already know? Certainly He does. Jesus said, "your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Matthew 6:8). We do not pray to inform God of what He does not know or to remind Him of things He already knows. We pray because He wills that we express our dependence on Him, cast our burdens upon Him, and draw near to Him in trust.

Furthermore, there is a spiritual unloading in speaking to God. Hannah understood this when she said, "I ... have poured out my soul before the LORD" (1 Samuel 1:15). So must we. We are to make our requests known unto God. 1 Peter 5:7 says, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." This also rebukes our

common tendency to make our troubles known everywhere except at the throne of grace. When something troubles us, we often immediately speak to men. We text, complain, rehearse the matter, and seek relief horizontally. There is a proper place for counsel, fellowship, and mutual prayer. But our first instinct must be vertical: "unto God".

In Philippians 4:5, Paul says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men"; but in verse 6, using the same root word for knowing, he says, "let your requests be made known unto God". In verse 6, the command in the present tense carries the sense of a continuing practice: let your requests keep being made known unto God. By contrast, in verse 5, the command in the aorist tense calls us to be calm and controlled in relating to others, but not as though our chief concern were that others should see how moderate we are. Since "the Lord is at hand", that is, He is near us, we need not be occupied with whether others think we are composed. But we certainly must be occupied with bringing our burdens to God. Thus, when anxiety presses, the believer's duty is clear: not to parade his composure before men, but to pour out his requests unto God.

THE CURED SOUL: KEPT BY THE PEACE OF GOD

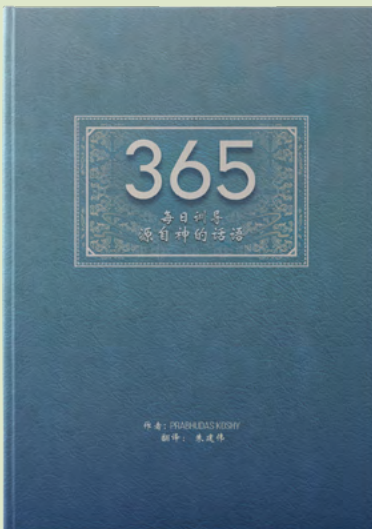
Then comes the promise: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7). This does not mean every problem will immediately vanish, for Paul does not promise that every painful circumstance will change at once. Rather, God promises us peace. This peace "passeth all understanding", meaning that it

exceeds human explanation. The world may understand peace after problems are solved, but it cannot understand peace while sorrows remain unresolved. God gives His people such peace: a calm, settled confidence in His favour, wisdom, and control.

This peace guards both “hearts and minds”. The verb “keep” means to guard. The peace of God guards the believer during times of trouble, like a sentry over our inner man. When anxiety attacks both our emotions and our thoughts, God’s peace guards the heart from collapse and the mind from confusion. This guarding peace does not remove all sorrow, but it prevents sorrow from gaining mastery over us. This guarding peace does not answer every question immediately, but it keeps the mind from being abandoned to utter chaos.

All this comes “through Christ Jesus”. There is no true peace apart from Christ. By His blood, Christ has reconciled us to God. By His mediation, Christ opens to us the throne of grace. By His intercession, Christ continues to plead for us before the Father. Therefore, the anxious believer may come to God the Father with confidence. Through Christ, believers have access not only to peace with God, but also to the peace of God—a peace that keeps the heart and mind amid life’s burdens. ■

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BIBLE TRIVIA—JOSHUA 16 & 17

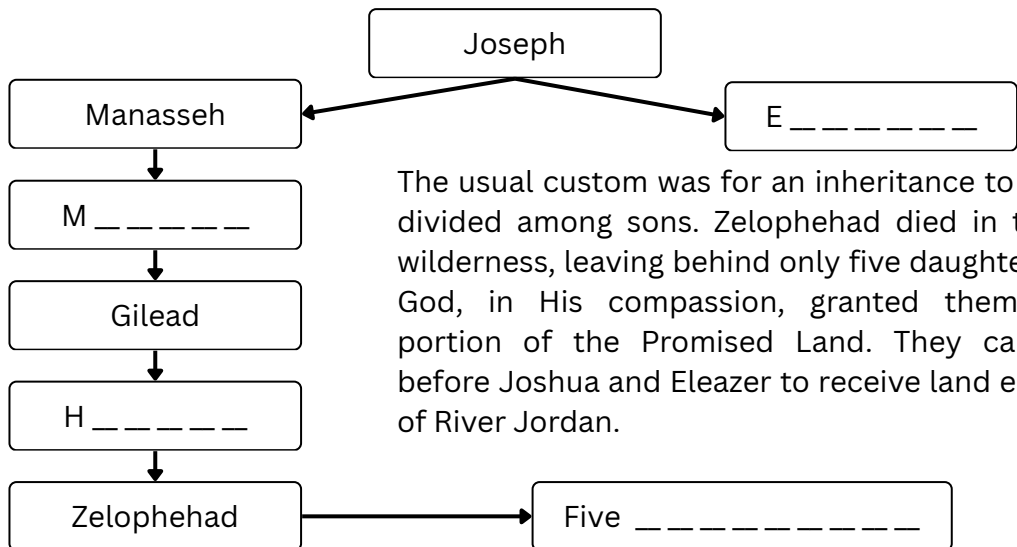
SARAH YONG

These two chapters describe the land which would be given to the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, after Judah (the first tribe) had received theirs. Ephraim, the second son of Joseph, was given firstborn rights (Genesis 48:14).

Read the passage. Then complete the trivia below by drawing a line to match each description of the land to that which was allocated to the respective tribe.

1. The north border was towards the sea to Michmethah.		2. The inhabitants continued dwelling in Megiddo in the north.
8. The western boundary was the coast of the Great Sea.	Ephraim	3. The east boundary was along the river Jordan.
7. The west border was from Beth Horon to the sea.	Manasseh	4. Eastward the border stretched unto the water of Jericho.
6. Their coast descended south to the river Kanah.		5. The Canaanites dwelt in Gezer at the southern tip.

Read Joshua 17:1-6, then fill in each box to complete the family tree below.



Answers to Bible Trivia—Joshua 15 (Vol. 26, Iss. 2, p. 23)

- 1) Judah, 2) Egypt, 3) Jordan, 4) Jerusalem, 5) Jephunneh, 6) Kirjathsepher, 7) Othniel, 8) Edom, 9) Jebusites

George Whitefield (1714-1770) - Part III

Retold by Jenny Lok
Layout and Art by Andronicus Koshy
made with AI assistance

Whitefield was on the brink of death, but miraculously survived the epidemic of fever that had hit many on board the vessel, "Whitaker".

[God] saw that I was not yet ripe for glory, and therefore in mercy spared me.

Four months after leaving England on 30 December 1737, Whitefield reached Georgia (a British colony then), which had a population of about a thousand.

In the following five months, he ministered to the congregation in Georgia.

Whitefield was so much loved and respected that in his last service with them, it was said, "The congregation was so [large] that a great many stood without the doors, and under the windows..."



The visit to Georgia had also opened Whitefield's eyes to the plight of the homeless orphans in the Colony.

I am now more determined than ever to secure permission from the authorities and raise money to set up an Orphan House!



The return voyage proved to be highly dangerous and nerve-wracking, particularly so when the ship briefly lost its way in the vast ocean.

Since returning to England, Whitefield had to deal with increasing opposition to his preaching ministry.

Several clergymen resented his growing influence and sought to put obstacles in his path by denying him the use of certain churches.

Because of this, Whitefield decided:

If I'm not allowed to preach indoors, nothing can stop me from preaching outdoors!

This idea of bringing his sermons outside the church building originated from a lay preacher Howell Harris, a Welshman with a "kindred spirit and similar zeal".

What followed was the beginning of Whitefield's attempt at open-air preaching.

Near Bristol, Whitefield (together with William Seward, an enthusiastic supporter of God's work) found a huge number of miners or colliers living with their families in a coal-mining district named Kingswood.

With his "great organ-like voice" and "dramatic oratory", Whitefield preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ – "a friend of publicans and sinners" (Matthew 11:19) who "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark 2:17).

One day at Kingswood, the number of people who listened to Whitefield's preaching grew from two hundred to several thousand.

The Gospel message had undoubtedly touched the hearts of these coal miners who shed "tears which plentifully fell down their black cheeks, as they came out of their coalpits".



As reported by Whitefield,

Hundreds and hundreds of them were soon brought under deep conviction, which as the event proved, happily ended in a sound and thorough conversion.

With a heart full of thanksgiving to the Lord, Whitefield then departed for London, after having left the Bristol work to his friend John Wesley.

Shortly after arriving in London, Whitefield found two places where he would later preach regularly to thousands of people.

The first was a notorious location in Moorfields, known for its unruly crowds.



'Whitefield Preaching in Moorfields, A.D. 1742' by Eyre Crowe (1865)

Thus, preachers like Whitefield might face the danger of being attacked or even killed during preaching.

Unexpectedly, Whitefield was not only unharmed but welcomed with open arms by the multitude.

Without a single doubt, God's goodness and mercy were at work!

The second location was a large open field known as "Kennington Common" or "The Common".



Signs of poverty were everywhere – unkempt and sickly-looking people were present in great numbers; fighting, drunkenness, and public hangings were common occurrences.

Henceforth, Whitefield divided his time between Moorfields and Kennington Common. The outcome was very encouraging as huge crowds thronged the preaching sites. Many responded to the Gospel and received Christ as their Lord and Saviour. At the same time, contributions towards the building of the "Orphan House" were collected, which gladdened Whitefield's heart.

The tremendous opportunities to preach the Gospel to the ever-growing crowd filled Whitefield with so much joy and strength that he said,

God was pleased to pour into my soul a great spirit of supplication, and a sense of His free, [noticeable] mercies so filled me with love, humility, joy...

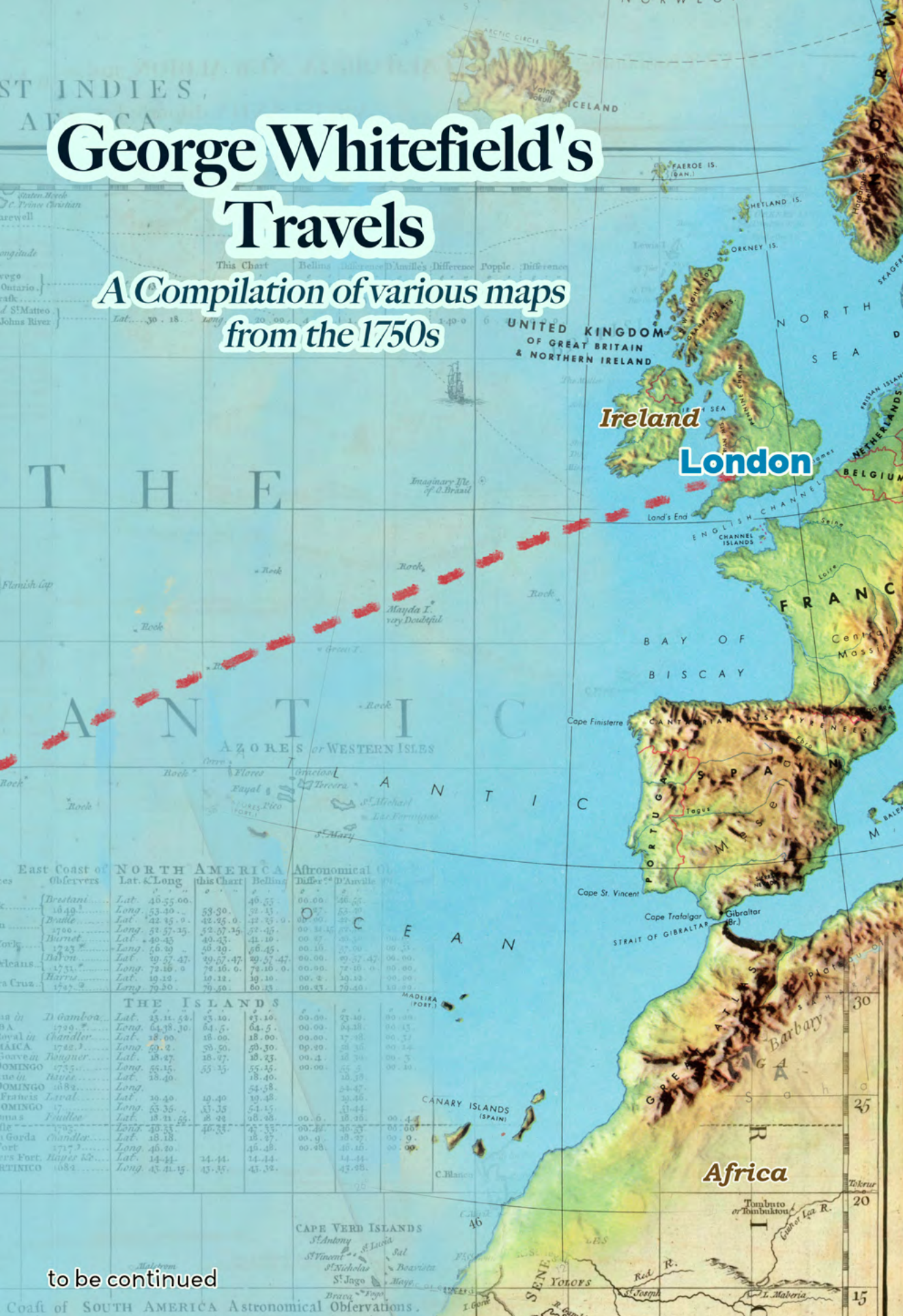
Certainly, any weariness that Whitefield felt would instantly be forgotten in his excitement to preach the Word!

Georgia

Before Whitefield made his trip back to America, he encouraged his friend, Charles Wesley, to take over the preaching ministry in London. Charles rose to the task and soon became an open-air preacher of great power.

George Whitefield's Travels

A Compilation of various maps from the 1750s



Ireland

London

East Coast of North America Observers	NORTH AMERICA		Astronomical Observations			
	Lat. & Long.	this Chart	Bellin's	Differ. °	D'Anville	
Brestani	Lat. 40.55.00.	40.55.	40.55.	00.00.	40.55.	
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Battle	Lat. 42.45.09.	42.45.0.	42.45.0.	00.00.	42.45.	
1760	Long. 51.57.35.	52.07.15.	52.45.	00.38.4.	52.30.	
Burnet	Lat. 40.45.	40.45.	41.10.	00.27.	40.50.	
1723	Long. 56.49.	56.49.	56.45.	00.10.	57.00.	
Dalton	Lat. 39.57.47.	39.57.47.	39.57.47.	00.00.	39.57.47.	
1731	Long. 72.10.0.	72.10.0.	72.10.0.	00.00.	72.10.0.	
Harris	Lat. 19.12.	19.12.	19.10.	00.2.	19.12.	
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OMINGO 1755	Long. 55.15.	55.15.	55.15.	00.00.	55.5.	00.10.
os in Haiti	Lat. 18.40.	18.40.	18.40.	00.00.	18.35.	00.10.
OMINGO 1884	Long.	54.58.	54.47.	00.47.	54.47.	00.40.
France Latval	Lat. 10.40.	10.40.	10.48.	00.48.	11.44.	00.44.
OMINGO	Long. 53.35.	53.35.	54.15.	00.6.	53.35.	00.44.
mas Fouldes	Lat. 18.31.56.	18.31.	18.35.	00.6.	18.35.	00.44.
1755	Long. 43.33.	43.33.	43.33.	00.27.	43.33.	00.00.
Gorda Chandler	Lat. 18.18.	18.18.	18.27.	00.9.	18.27.	00.9.
Port 1753	Long. 46.10.	46.10.	46.48.	00.28.	46.10.	00.00.
ers Fort. Napier 182	Lat. 14.44.	14.44.	14.44.	00.00.	14.44.	00.00.
REINICO 1684	Long. 43.41.15.	43.35.	43.34.	00.43.	43.25.	00.10.

to be continued



A Photo Report of the 27th BW Retreat

Scenes from our recent retreat in Kerala, India. God has brought together over 140 participants to study on the theme "The Christian Virtue of Thanksgiving".

