

*Overcoming the Hurdles of Life
Through the Power
of
Prayer, Worship and the Scriptures*

PERSONAL TESTIMONIES

*Written by
Jasmine Ghala
British Columbia, Canada*

Copyright 2015 ©

*Cast your care on the Lord and He will sustain
you. He will never let the righteous fall
Psalm 55:22*

*Overcoming the Hurdles of Life
Through the Power
of
Prayer, Worship and the Scriptures*

Written by

Jasmine Ghala

British Columbia, Canada

Copyright 2015 ©

www.overcominghurdles.ca

Contact information: overcominghurdles@shaw.ca

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. – KJV

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray for all who read this book that you will bless them all and give them good health and prosper them in every walk of their lives. I pray that you will give them faith to be healed. Lord, fill them with your Holy Spirit, give them power to forgive, a humble heart to receive forgiveness and help them experience your amazing peace, love, joy and wisdom. Amen!

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

FOREWORD

Overcoming the hurdles of life

Through the power of prayer, worship and the scriptures

"For over 50 years, the primary focus of our Crossroads/100 Huntley Street television ministry has been to give a platform for people to share their own personal testimonies...stories of ordinary people who serve an extra-ordinary God. As I read this book by Jasmine Ghala, who has been a long-time supporter of our ministry, I began to praise God for being faithful to His promises to bless those who put their faith in Him, trusting Him in every area of their lives...like Jasmine. She has experienced the miracle-working power of God physically, financially, relationally, both in her home and work life. Through a series of personal stories, scriptures, and even prayers for those of us reading, you will be greatly uplifted to and your faith will be challenged to believe God for His supernatural working in your every-day life."

Rev. Ron Mainse

Co-Host, 100 Huntley Street
Spiritual Director,
Crossroads Christian Communications Inc.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

DEDICATION

Overcoming the Hurdles of Life

Through the power of prayer, worship and the scriptures

This book is dedicated to the loving memory of my late parents Kundanlal and Taramati. Their teachings and loving instructions have deeply influenced me and will remain with me all my life.

I thank my late husband for bringing me to the knowledge of the Lord and his companionship in worshiping the Lord every morning. His zeal to worship the Lord has deeply impacted me and I continue to cherish it in my life.

I thank my husband's parents for their warm welcome and valuable gifts despite our differences in faith.

Jasmine Ghala

British Columbia, Canada

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Overcoming the hurdles of life

Through the power of prayer, worship and the scriptures

This book is the result of many answered prayers. I thank my heavenly Father, God the creator, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit for healing me, teaching me, renewing my mind, and giving me his amazing peace, love, joy, wisdom and inspiration to write.

I thank my parents and family members whose sacrifices provided me with education. Without their loving care and support in my education, I wouldn't have been able to write this book. My special thanks to my late sister, my trustworthy doctor, for healing me with medicines and preventing me from an unnecessary operation. I convey my heartfelt thanks to my family doctor in BC for his skillful consultation and medical certificates when necessary. My special thanks to my brother's wife helping me avoid another unnecessary surgery. I thank my family on my husband's side for accepting us with warm hearts though we have turned to Christianity. My special thanks to my husband's parents for their appreciative nature, their valuable gifts and listening to my testimonies, with keen interest.

I am grateful to my family members, relatives and friends for reading my book and giving me some valuable suggestions.

I am glad to be a Canadian Citizen and thankful to the Government of Canada for accepting me a foreigner, in this country. My heartfelt thanks to the Government of British Columbia for giving me a grant to take courses and for providing me with free child care while going to school. Help from both the Governments, have given me opportunities and enabled me to write this book.

I am proud of all my school and college teachers in my home town in Gujarat and my teachers in the Vocational institute in BC for their dedicated love for teaching. Without that solid foundation in education, I probably would not have been able to write this book. I thank my various employers and my superiors for their caring instructions and warm hearts to provide me with excellent references.

I appreciate the late Rev. Roberts for his sincere prayer that brought me to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. I deeply appreciate my home Church and my ethnic church for their dedicated prayer ministry, their many inspiring camps and their wonderful teachings, worship music and counseling. 100 Huntley Street ministry of Crossroads Christian Communications Inc. and their 24/7 prayer line and many inspiring testimonies on the TV, have strengthened my faith and helped me understand the scriptures. I have also enjoyed praying with my friend Marion Garbe.

My heartfelt gratitude to Walmart, Canadian Tire, Superstore, Sleep Country, various churches, hotels, motels, my home church, colleagues, friends and many anonymous donors for their donations in cash and valuable items during our calamity of our apartment fire. Special thanks to Holiday Inn for free stay in their hotel. My special thanks to my landlords for giving us one month's free rent to us, during our calamity of losing everything in the fire.

I admire Microsoft Corporation for their software and iYogi Inc. for their technical support. I admire various Christian websites for helping me find the appropriate scripture reference for my book.

I thank Susan Jerema, the president of New Earth Marketing for inserting many beautiful pictures in this book that are applicable to various paragraphs and creating the lovely website and uploading my book. Thank you Susan, your marvelous work has been greatly appreciated.

Jasmine Ghala
British Columbia, Canada

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

INTRODUCTION

Overcoming the Hurdles of Life

Through the power of prayer, worship and the scriptures

Life is not a bed of roses. Often, it is like winning a war, or overcoming obstacle after obstacle. There are natural roadblocks and there are roadblocks that people throw at us and there are blockages of our own mind and attitudes.

We have many options: (1) We can withdraw from the race, hide, turn away, take a different route or (2) face the problems and (2a) overcome them and be a humble winner or (2b) be brave to take a defeat like a politician and be a gracious loser and keep on trying or (2c) be discouraged from a defeat and never show our face to anyone.

Effort, perseverance and will power can help a lot, but to a limit. What if our efforts, perseverance and will power fail? Then what? Are we then going to understand and accept our limitations? That may be wise in some circumstances! Or, are we then going to be discouraged from being persistent and never try again? Are we going to be timid for the rest of our lives? No! That doesn't sound good! Or is there another way?

It is not always necessary to solve all the difficulties in our lives. We can avoid some of them altogether and not to worry about them and live a happy life. However, there are some problems in our lives and they must be overcome, lest we perish. Often, it is important that we find solutions to our problems. There is no other better choice, and therefore, it is wiser to know how we may overcome the hurdles in our lives that are absolutely necessary to overcome.

The whole argument above is summed up in one small prayer: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot or I should not change, the courage to change the things I can and I must change and the wisdom to know the difference."

This book is a true story about my personal life experiences, describing overcoming the hurdles of life that were absolutely necessary and important to overcome.

I am not talking about great victories in life, such as climbing Mount Everest, swimming across Lake Ontario, sailing around the world, or doing scientific research. As an ordinary person, I faced many difficulties and obstacles in my life, doing ordinary things, acquiring the basic necessities of life and succeeding in normal tasks, such as health, education, jobs, business, marriage, accommodation, family matters, etc. My desire is to help my readers, to give them hope and inspiration, to fight the hurdles and battles of life and overcome them.

Often, we are amazed in James Bond movies how he overcomes all the obstacles in his path. However, the difference is that this book is not a fictitious story with fictitious strength and victories of a fictitious character. ***This is a true story with true victories of a real person through the power of prayer to our Lord Jesus who is real and who lives for evermore.***

It is my earnest desire to reach out to ordinary people like me who have to go through struggles every step of the way to acquire the basic ordinary things of life. May God inspire them all and bless them as they read this book and help them overcome hurdles in their lives through the power of prayer, worship and the scriptures. Let it all be for his glory.

Jasmine Ghala
British Columbia, Canada

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

DISCLAIMER

Overcoming the hurdles of life

Through the power of prayer, worship and the scriptures

Each and every chapter of this book is a true story of my life. I have tried to recreate events, locales and conversations from my memories of them and changed names of most of the individuals and entities to protect their privacy, except where the permission was granted to me verbally. Any likeness to the actual individuals and the entities are simply coincidental. I do not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage or disruption caused by errors or omissions whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident or any other cause.

The Bible scriptures are taken from The New International Version of the Holy Bible except where mentioned, otherwise. Although every effort has been made to make the printed version of book to be identical to e book, due to different ISBN for each version both copies may not be verbatim.

I do not have any degree in theology. The comparison between the stories of my life with the Bible scriptures is according to my own understanding and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This book is the result of numerous prayers that have been answered in my life; but not all answered prayers are written in this book. I must confess that there are also some unanswered prayers in my life which have not been mentioned in this book. Someday the Lord will reveal to me his purpose behind my unanswered prayers. Although God has helped me overcome a number of hurdles, I am still facing some hurdles at the time of writing this book, which I have yet to overcome.

There are suggested prayers in every chapter. These prayers are meant to help the readers establish a connection with our Lord Jesus. They don't need to be rigid. It is entirely up to the individuals and God to make the connections with each other.

This book is designed to enhance faith and motivate the readers to pray. The writer is not engaged in rendering any type of psychological, spiritual or professional advice. The content in each article is the sole expression and opinion of the author. No warranties or guaranties are expressed or implied by the author. The author shall not be liable for any physical, emotional, psychological, financial or commercial damages, including but not limited to, special, incidental, consequential or other damages. The author's views and the rights are the same: You are responsible for your own choices, actions, and results.

I have studied the Jain religion during the early years of my life, mainly "PanchPratikraman" and "NavSmaran" in Jain school in the original Ardhamagadhi language with its translation in Gujarati. Many Jain historical stories have been taught to me verbally by my parents. At the time of writing this book, I did not have access to Jain scriptures. However, the essence of the Jain religion mentioned in this book is based upon the teachings from my parents, studies during the early years of my life, living among Jains and observing Jain rituals and practices during those days.

Although I have made every effort to ensure that the information in this book was correct at the time of going to the website/prints/books/press, I do not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause.

Jasmine Ghala,
British Columbia, Canada

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Through the power of prayer, worship and the scriptures

| <u>CHAPTER</u> | <u>TITLE</u> | <u>PAGE</u> |
|----------------|---|-------------|
| 1. | The Amazing Healing Power | 8 |
| 2. | Conquering Hurdles to Education | 11 |
| 3. | The Roller Coaster Ride in my First Job | 17 |
| 4. | Our First Church | 21 |
| 5. | Unforgettable Trip | 23 |
| 6. | Jobs, Health & Security | 27 |
| 7. | Pride goes before Destruction | 32 |
| 8. | The Power of Forgiveness | 45 |
| 9. | Power in the Blood & Light of the World | 57 |
| 10. | Gratitude | 60 |
| 11. | Ungratefulness | 61 |
| 12. | Samaritan's Help | 63 |
| 13. | Now is the Time to Forgive | 67 |
| 14. | New Direction | 69 |
| 15. | Legal Battles | 71 |
| 16. | Moving Forward From Auxiliary | 74 |
| 17. | Power of Worship | 75 |
| 18. | Blessed are those Who Mourn | 78 |
| 19. | Authority's Order Not to Pray | 80 |
| 20. | The Battlefield | 82 |
| Appendix 1 | Jainism and Christianity – A Comparison | 121 |

CHAPTER 1

THE AMAZING HEALING POWER

Sick, Depressed and Confused:

My health deteriorated when we were traveling in North America and gradually it became worse, as we arrived and settled in British Columbia. My family doctor sent me to a specialist who performed a minor surgery that made me worse. Then, several months went by, as I became sicker than before. When I informed the doctor about my condition, he told me: "Jasmine, you need a hysterectomy. We can book a date in the hospital for the surgery". The doctor's suggestion did not appeal to me and I was afraid to go ahead with the operation. I could not obtain any recommendation of better doctors, as I knew only a few people in this new province. My eldest sister Lata, my trustworthy medical doctor, was overseas and it was not at all feasible at the time for me to travel. I was sick, depressed and confused, not knowing what to do.

Healing Touch to a Skeptical Minded Person:

One morning, my husband was watching a man on the television, preaching about Jesus. I stayed away because I was skeptical and didn't want to get hooked into paying donations which may be used for an unworthy cause. He was amazed to see many miracles of the healing of people by the power of God through prayers. All of a sudden, I heard this preacher saying: "If you have a sickness in your body, Jesus can heal you. Only believe with me as I pray for you, and Jesus will heal you", and he mentioned a scripture from the Bible:

John 16: 24

"Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." ☺

Answer to Prayer ☺

I was totally amazed that this preacher offered healing first before asking for a donation. I suddenly went in front of the television and prayed with him. That very moment, the bleeding stopped. I was healed. I also received regularity in my female cycles as the months went by. What amazed me was that it was only a generic prayer. Pastor Roberts did not know what kind of sickness I had, but Jesus knew my problems and he healed me. Hallelujah! Praise the name of Jesus!!

Yes, for the first time, I acknowledged the healing power of Jesus and his mercy, through preacher Roberts in the spring of 1978, as we were settling down in BC and it changed my life a hundred and eighty degrees.

After a few years when I had access to the Bible I was amazed to find a similar healing touch of Jesus in the scriptures.

Luke 8: 43 to 48

43: And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her.

44: She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

45: “Who touched me?” Jesus asked.

When they all denied it, Peter said, “Master, people are crowding and pressing against you.”



46: But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; I know that the power has gone out from me.”

47: Then the woman, knowing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.

48: Then he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”

When Rev. Roberts prayed to Jesus, I was healed though he did not touch me.

First Difficult Delivery: ☹

In Ontario, when my first son was born, I was extremely sick, suffering in the hospital with pain and discomfort. I had anemia, but the doctor did not give me a blood transfusion because of the fear of a reaction. Apart from lack of blood, I had numerous other problems and no help. I was a vegetarian and the hospital did not give me enough vegetarian food. I could not nurse my baby because of malnourishment. Apart from the joy of a new baby, I was miserable in my health. Only the joy of my new born sustained me.

Nobody told me about Jesus. I was not aware that there were Christian pastors in the hospital. If I had known, I would have asked them for a prayer for healing. I wished somebody had told me about the availability of prayer and explained to me the power of prayer.

After my first baby, I began to experiment with cooking and eating according to the custom of this country with the hope of a better survival.

Second Easier Delivery: ☺

Answer to Prayer

After a couple of years, during my second pregnancy, my husband had sent a prayer request to the same preacher Roberts in Faith City, to pray for me. My second delivery went very smoothly. Everything was normal and I was healthy, happy, and able to nurse my baby and there was tremendous joy in my heart which felt kind of supernatural.

At that time, I did not make the connection that this could be a result of prayer. I thought it was because of my change of diet, new doctor, different hospital and a blood transfusion.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

When I looked back, it appeared to me that it was the power of Jesus through the prayer of Rev. Roberts that kept me healthy during my second delivery. I also believed that it was his power that changed the environment during my second delivery which helped me to be healthy.

Moving Around – from Jainism to Introduction to Christ:

I was born in India and raised in Jain religion. Since my teenage years, I had practiced spending some time every day reading and reciting Jain scriptures and praying for peace from various planets. My husband was also born and raised in a Jain family. After our marriage, we moved to Canada and I continued that practice while we were in Ontario and again when we moved around and later settled in British Columbia.

Here, in BC I came to know Jesus and his healing power through Rev. Roberts of Faith City, who prayed for the healing of his viewers on television, which I talked about in the earlier paragraphs. The first time, Jesus took care of the delivery of my second baby in Ontario, I did not acknowledge the healing power of Jesus, but the second time in BC, I acknowledged his healing touch upon me and then my life began to change.

No Church, No Bible:

I neither had a Bible nor any affiliation with any church at that time. Because of my experience of answered prayers I contacted children's day care center which was operating in a church and I borrowed a Bible from them. I read several pages starting from the book of Genesis but they did not make any sense to me and I was not able to see Jesus in those pages. So I returned it. Out of curiosity, I went into that church sanctuary but did not see anybody bowing down to any idols. I found it strange because that's what I was used to in a Jain temple. During Christmas, I saw a few Bible movies on TV and they were exciting but I could not see Jesus in them. From the preacher Roberts' show, I learned how to pray and that made my life full of excitement and joy. I wasn't thinking about following Christ then, but I was enjoying and basking in the miraculous power of Christ. Jesus is the healer and if you need healing, let us pray in agreement.

Matthew 18: 19, 20

19. ".....I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.

20. For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them."

If you have a sickness in your body, and if you would like the Lord Jesus to heal you, please join with me in prayer.

Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I pray for my readers and their loved ones that you will touch them with your healing hands and heal them from the inside out, from head to toe, in their mind, body and spirit and make them whole. Lord, remove their sickness, pain and discomfort. Lord give them strength and energy. Lord, give them faith to be healed. Amen!

CHAPTER 2

CONQUERING HURDLES TO EDUCATION

Economic Conditions: ☹️

As we settled into our new home in BC, my husband started looking for a job. But the economic condition of this Province was very poor and the businesses had hard time to survive. After some struggles, he found a temporary job, then was unemployed and then found a job and so on. His job situation was not steady and the unemployment in the city was unbelievable. He also started his accounting practice from home. We delivered flyers and he had a few clients.

It was always my dream that I would stay home with our preschool age children. However, with my husband not having a steady job, I started looking for work. I couldn't find employment as a technician where I had some previous experience in this country as there was nothing available in that field.

There were hardly any advertisements in the newspaper for employment, except for a few, mostly in accounting/bookkeeping or office work.

When there was an advertisement for a position with a phone number to call, there would be busy signals for days and the job would already be filled by the time I could talk to the employer.

There was an article in the newspaper that an employer advertised to apply in person. People lined up for an interview and the line was so long that it ran for a couple of blocks down the street!

One time, there was an advertisement to apply in person between 9:30 am and 11:30 am. I reached there around eleven, and they allowed more people until 11:30 and then they shut the door saying, "No more applicants", because the hall was full with over 500 people. They only had three positions available.

A newspaper reported that an employer received thousands of letters responding to one position. That the position was filled quickly and he threw away many letters without opening them. There may have been most qualified applicants whose letters were not opened.

The economic condition of this province was very poor. It was almost impossible for me to get employed as I did not have any office or accounting related experience.

A Tough Path for Education: ☹️

Therefore, I decided to go back to school. I went to a Government office and met with my counselor Wendy to discuss the possibility of receiving government grant for further education leading to a job. She informed me about a big waiting list. I urged her to keep my name on the waiting list. She informed me that there were a few thousand people ahead of me and that it might take several years. I kept in touch with her by calling her once a month inquiring as to how much the waiting list had been reduced. Then, one time she rebuked me with a stern voice that I need not bother her every month. She affirmed there was no chance of me getting the grant for a few years and I should not call the Centre for at least another six months. ☹️

After I received my physical healing (as described in the first chapter) through the prayers of Rev. Roberts, praying on the television show, I eagerly waited for his show the next Sunday. This time he taught me another Bible verse:

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Philippians 4:19 ☺

And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

When I heard these words from the preacher, I was flabbergasted. I had never heard such a saying in my life. These words were like precious pearls to me.

I immediately wrote a letter to the preacher asking him to pray for me that I would receive a government grant to enroll in some useful course to help me find a job. I prayed according to how he taught us to pray through the television ministry.

Answer to Prayer: ☺

Then I received a phone call from another counsellor Mrs. Wise from the Government office for an opening if I was still available. It was within a week since I was told not to call them. Hallelujah! Praise the name of Jesus! He answers prayers!

*Thank you, BC! Thank you, Canada!
Thank You, Lord!*

I requested an accounting course, because of my husband being an accountant. Jobs were very hard to find, and there was a possibility of both of us doing accounting practice together. However, she explained that they would only sponsor me for a three month clerk-typist course and if I did well, then, they may sponsor me for a nine month accounting course. I agreed.



Moving on to an Accounting Course:

I started with a clerk-typist course at a vocational institute. Within a week or two, during a conversation with another student named Patricia, I found out that she was in an accounting course right from the start without going through a clerk typist course.

Then, I called Mrs. Wise at the Government office informing her about this situation and pleaded that I should be able to do the same. She explained to me that she was under the impression that a student must take a short three month course before getting into a longer course. However, it was all up to the school and I should be contacting them.

The next day, I went to my class teacher Mr. Bailys, and he sent me to the chief instructor, Mrs. Colton. I talked to Mrs. Colton, but she sent me back again to Mr. Bailys who, again sent me back to Mrs. Colton, who sent me back to Mrs. Wise, the government counselor, who sent me back again to the chief instructor, Mrs. Colton.

Oh! It was quite a runaround! Now, Mrs. Colton was furious, so she told me that I did not have good marks in my assignments and I was not fit to take accounting and she threatened that if I went to her again, she would drop me out of the school completely. ☹

That night, I held on to the promise of the Bible.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Philippians: 4: 19 - King James Version (KJV)

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory – by Christ Jesus. 😊

I fervently prayed and pleaded to the Lord that I needed to take the accounting course and I should not be dropped out of school at all. I also wrote a letter to Rev. Roberts in the Faith City asking for his prayers.

Something Strange:

I went to school the next day. The atmosphere in my class and around teachers' offices seemed so strange that I could not explain it. Students were informed that Mr. Bailys was detained, and he was the one in favor of transferring me to the accounting course. Now he was detained! I prayed all the more. That whole week, I sensed something unusual was going on in the school but I could not understand what it was. I could discern some upheaval in the atmosphere at the school, but was unable to describe it. Then, Mrs. Colton was away for a few days.

Answer to Prayer: 😊 *Thank you, teachers!*

At the end of the week, the acting chief instructor, Mrs. Becker, called me into her office and told me, “Jasmine, you were bugging us for three months! Now, what do you think we should do to you?” Then she smiled and said, “We have to transfer you to accounting!” Hallelujah! I did not get kicked out of the school and I got what I asked for. I was also glad to see Mr. Bailys back to teaching. Almost at the end of my clerk-typist course, I got into the accounting course! It made me happy! *Thank you, Lord!*

Jesus proved his foregoing words according to *Philippians 4: 19* and supplied my needs, and according to *John 16: 24* he fulfilled my joy.

***John 16: 24* 😊**

Until now you have not asked anything in my name. Ask and you shall receive, and your joy will be complete.

A Tough Path to an Accounting Diploma: 😞

In my accounting class, we had a very strict instructor named Mr. Myles. Some students complained because he was too strict. However, I honored and admired him.

Punctuality Issue: Once when Mr. Myles saw that I was late to the class, he warned me privately that if I was ever late again, he would drop me out of accounting, explaining the importance of punctuality. 😞

Life was not easy living in one bedroom apartment with only one toilet and all four of us getting ready for work, school and day care. In the morning my husband drove our two boys, who were 3 and 5 years old, to the day care, on his way to work and I took a bus to school. Then, I learned to shorten my hugs and kisses with my children and ran to the bus stop every morning, leaving my children with their daddy.

Accuracy Issue: After some time, when Mr. Myles was reviewing my assignment, he found an arithmetic error and again he warned me privately that arithmetic was basic in accounting and if he ever found any other arithmetic error, he would drop me out of accounting. 😞

I prayed and learned to be careful. I did my calculations two ways, manually as well as on a calculator and did not finalize them until both calculations matched and I checked the accuracy on the calculator tape. I also realized that I was making errors. I had been in a car accident about fifteen

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

years before and had a brain injury on the right side of my brain. It had affected my ability to calculate, but now I was able to visualize it in the mirror. However, I learned and practiced to be more accurate.

Spelling Issue: Then, Mr. Myles found spelling errors in my assignments. Again he warned me privately that the spelling accuracy was important and if he ever found any spelling errors on the financial statements, he would drop me out of the accounting course. ☹️

Well, I had been a housewife for many years and did not need much spelling accuracy to do my house work, so I wasn't very good at it. I prayed and became careful and checked with the dictionary so that all my spelling was correct before submitting my assignments.

I came home earlier than my husband and children. It gave me some time for dinner preparations for the family and work on my school assignments.

Rental Problem: ☹️

The apartment building that we lived in was not very peaceful. The apartment manager lived downstairs from us. He frequently got drunk and came home and beat his wife. I heard her cries and felt sorry for her and had difficulty concentrating on my study. When I came from school, she saw me and she knocked at my door crying. I felt sorry for her and invited her in and made a cup of coffee for her. We sat down and I listened to her.

After coming from school, I did not pick up my children from the day care, so that I could have a peaceful time for studying and cooking. However, my peaceful study time was used up in comforting my neighbor.

With school and study I had no time for moving, but continued to stay there even though it wasn't the best place. However, there was no peace for studies. Therefore, finally we decided we should move to a better place. I came home from school and looked for advertisements for rental. I was shocked to know that most of the owners advertised 'adults only', meaning they did not rent to people with children. ☹️ Some people did not put that clause in the newspaper, but they refused to rent to us because of children. ☹️ Where could children go then? There were very few places where they allowed children and those places did not look very hygienic. ☹️ After a month of frustration, I began praying. One weekend, I sacrificed my studies and fervently prayed and wrote a letter to that preacher in Faith City.

I asked Jesus to provide us with the following:

- 1) A three bedroom apartment with one and a half bathrooms and a balcony;
- 2) A well maintained apartment, building and the complex;
- 3) An indoor swimming pool (I needed to swim year round for health reasons);
- 4) Not wasting useless time looking for a place;
- 5) An affordable rent;

The next Monday, when I came home from school, I decided I would trust the Lord to find me a place. I was determined not to waste my time in reading advertisements and making useless phone calls. Instead, I studied and cooked dinner. When my husband came home from work, he told me that his boss had recommended a very nice place and he had made an appointment with the director for us. We went to see her about the apartment. Instantly, I thought this was an answer to my prayer.

Answer to Prayer: ☺️

Thank you, Lord!

In the old apartment we were paying \$240 per month. In the new apartment, it would be \$252 per month. For only extra twelve dollars, it was ten times better. The apartment as well as the entire building was well maintained with brand new paint and carpets, just the way I had

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

prayed. There was an indoor swimming pool for the complex and a lovely playground. We had three bedrooms with one and half bathrooms and a covered balcony.

Yes, Jesus gave us an apartment with affordable rent, fulfilling all our needs for accommodation, without having to read newspapers, without wasting time on useless phone calls and trips to look around. He answered all the details of my prayer.

Praise the name of Jesus! Thank you for the pool.



Our Move: 😊

We moved into the new place. It was worthwhile to spend time in packing, moving, unpacking and a bit extra in transit, because I was able to study in peace and quiet. Being able to swim every day for the sake of my health was an excellent blessing from the Lord.



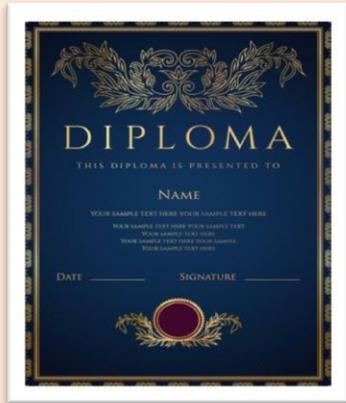
OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

A Letter of Reference: 😊

When my course was about to end, I prayed that Mr. Myles who had warned me several times and threatened to drop me out of accounting, would give me a reference letter which would help me to find employment.

Answer to Prayer: 😊

Thank you, school!



Thank you, teacher!

I received my accounting diploma and Mr. Myles gave me a wonderful letter of reference. He mentioned in his letter that ‘She worked industriously and conscientiously and performed in superior manner in all the related phases of the course and it is my opinion that she will be an attribute to an office.’ I was hired shortly after I completed my course. Lord answered my prayer. Thank You, Lord!

*Lord, prosper my teachers!
Lord, prosper BC!*

Lord, prosper Canada!

Some of my readers may have some problems concerning their accommodation, education, job, business situation or a drunken spouse. If you wish, let us pray together.

Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I pray for my readers and their loved ones, that you will show your compassionate and mighty power in their lives and resolve whatever problems they are going through, whether it is concerning health problem, or finding a home, or taking education, or finding jobs, or doing well in business, family, accommodation or anything else. I pray that you will resolve their problems and provide for their needs. Lord, I also pray for those men and women who suffer because of their spouses who are drunk and alcoholic and do not treat their spouses with dignity. I pray for those suffering spouses that you will give them your peace and comfort them. I pray for those men and women who are alcoholics and addicted to undesirable things that you will minister to them and make them free from their bondage. Let it all be for your glory. Amen!

Unanswered Prayer:

Rev. Roberts explained on his show that he needed a lot of money for the work of God that he was involved in. I sent him a lottery ticket and asked him to pray to win. We didn't win the lottery.

Healing-Was it Complete?

Lord had healed me from severe bleeding and then he had answered many of my prayers. I realized that it happened again when I went back to my old habit of worshipping other gods and idols. We put them away and the sickness of bleeding disappeared. We were unaware of Biblical instructions about idols. We brought them to our new home but did not worship them. I will explain this in more details in later chapters.

THE ROLLER COASTER RIDE IN MY FIRST JOB

Soon after I received my accounting diploma and a reference letter from my teacher, I was hired as an accountant in a Chartered Accountant's office. ☺ There were three partners in the firm. Two partners worked in the same main office where I worked. It was my understanding that Bert had disagreed ☹ with Chris, who hired me, because I had no experience. Barry was the manager of the second branch office.

After all the training in the classroom, I learned a lot in my job. It was all manual accounting work in those days. I did the bookkeeping and accounting for small businesses as well as very large companies who had hundreds of ledger accounts and large numbers of transactions every month. Sometimes, I brought some work home. My bosses never asked me any questions about taking the work home and I never told them anything. My husband helped me when I had some difficulty balancing a trial balance of hundreds of ledger accounts and occasionally reconciling bank statements with hundreds of transactions. In school, we did accounting for only about thirty ledger accounts and may be about fifty bank transactions per month.

Chris, who made the choice to hire me, was away for a few weeks. During that time I asked Bert to give me some files and discussed with him the work that I had performed. Bert seemed to appreciate my work and looked like he developed confidence in my work. ☺ I finished financial statements for various companies and he seemed to be happy with my work and work attitudes.

A Vocabulary Issue: ☹

One day, Barry, the manager of the branch office, called me. He needed some information from the 'synoptic' of a client.

Alas! I had studied accounting for a year and had never heard the word 'synoptic'. In my school, we used words like 'Cash Journal', 'Sales Journal', etc. But everything was just a journal and nobody ever called it synoptic. I fumbled over this word and I was too nervous to ask what he meant by 'synoptic'. After a few minutes of frustration he asked me to look in the blue book and I immediately found the answer to his question and gave it to him.

My boss, Chris, returned to the office after a few days and immediately, Barry came rushing to the main office and I understood that he tried convincing Chris to fire me. I was able to perceive what kind of discussion was going on in Chris's office. Barry was furious and pleaded for hours before Chris about firing me. I could sense the topic of discussion in their office and I prayed at my work station that God would protect my job and give me a chance to show that I could do it. Jesus is wonderful. I neither went to any church nor did I have any Bible then. I didn't have to cite any specific 'mantra'. But the Lord listened to my prayers in my own words.

Answer to Prayer: ☺

I was able to perceive that Bert was in favor to keep me in the office and he was stubborn and hardened his heart and did not allow Chris and Barry to fire me. Hallelujah! God answers prayers! I continued to work there.

After some time, when I had access to the Bible, I found following paragraphs in the Bible where God had hardened the heart of Pharaoh. My above mentioned experience in this office was very similar to the following scripture, concerning hardening the heart of an individual.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Exodus 7: 1 - 5

1. Then the Lord said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet.
2. You are to say everything I command you, and your brother Aaron is to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his country.
3. But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart and though I multiply my miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt,
4. He will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and with mighty acts of judgment I will bring out my divisions, my people the Israelites.
5. And the Egyptian will know that I am the Lord when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out of it.”

Exodus 8:16 - 19

16. Then the Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground’, and throughout the land of Egypt the dust will become gnats.”
17. They did this and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats came upon men and animals. All the dust throughout the land of Egypt became gnats.
18. But when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, they could not. And the gnats were on men and animals.
19. The magician said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God. But Pharaoh’s heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the Lord had said.”

The book of Exodus has many such verses where God hardened Pharaoh’s heart and made him stubborn. In my situation, I found that God hardened Barry’s heart to plead to Chris to fire me and God had hardened Bert’s heart to stand by me to keep me in my job. I know this because from my work station, I could sense the heat in the debate that was going on in Chris’s office, between Chris, Bert and Barry. There was commotion and stubbornness among them. **But God gave me the victory.** I kept taking files from Chris and Bert and continued to work. Although, Barry didn’t like me, he worked in an office at a different location. During that time, I was able to build confidence in Chris also that I was capable of doing the work.

Voluminous File: ☹️ *Thank you Employer! You gave me a good challenge!*

Sometime later, I was doing bookkeeping for a client with a large volume of transactions. At one time, I found difficulty in reconciling the bank statements of this large company with voluminous transactions ☹️ and I was unable to do it within the time ☹️ limit given to me. Bert became impatient ☹️ with me. As a result, he took away the file from me ☹️ and gave it to other colleagues. Two of my senior colleagues, who were CA students, worked on the file and they accomplished the work. I wished my boss had asked my colleague to work with me and I would have accomplished the work too, together with a colleague! Alas! I was expected to do it all by ☹️ myself! Now, Bert, who previously supported me to keep me in the job, tried to convince Chris to fire me ☹️ and I could sense the heat and the debate in Chris’s office. Barry from the other office came in to join ☹️ Bert. Bert also tried to convince Chris’ wife Eileen, who worked as a receptionist, to convince Chris to fire ☹️ me. But Chris was stubborn and wouldn’t let me go. ☺️ Hallelujah!

I was at my work station and prayed to the Lord to save my job for a little longer as I had plans to visit India.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Answer to Prayer: ☺

Hallelujah! Our God is a God of miracles. Bert and Barry had hardened their hearts to fire me, but Chris was stubborn and hardened his heart to keep me in the job ☺ and did not let me go and I continued to ☺ work there. This was the power of God.

Here are a few more examples of scriptures where God hardened Pharaoh's heart.



Exodus 9: 13 – 35

13. Then the Lord said to Moses, “Get up early in the morning, confront Pharaoh and say to him, ‘this is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me,

14. or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and against your people, so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth.

15. For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth.

16. But I have raised you up for this very purpose that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

17. You still set yourself against my people and will not let them go.

18. Therefore, at this time tomorrow I will send the worst hailstorm that has ever fallen on Egypt, from the day it was founded till now.

19. Give an order now to bring your livestock and everything you have in the field to a place of shelter, because the hail will fall on every man and animal that has not been brought in and is still out in the field, and they will die’.”

20. Those officials of Pharaoh who feared the word of the Lord hurried to bring their slaves and their livestock inside.

21. But those who ignored the word of the Lord left their slaves and livestock in the field.

22. Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall all over Egypt – on men and animals and on everything growing in the fields of Egypt.”

23. When Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, the Lord sent thunder and hail, and lightning flashed down to the ground. So the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt;

24. Hail fell and lightning flashed back and forth. It was the worst storm in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

25. Throughout Egypt hail struck everything in the fields-both men and animals; it beat down everything growing in the fields and stripped every tree.
26. The only place it did not hail was the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were.
27. Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. "This time I have sinned," he said to them. The Lord is in the right, and I and my people are wrong.
28. Pray to the Lord, for we have had enough thunder and hail. I will let you go; you don't have to stay any longer."
29. Moses replied, "When I have gone out of the city, I will spread out my hands in prayer to the Lord. The thunder will stop and there will be no more hail, so you may know that the earth is the Lord's.
30. But I know that you and your officials still do not fear the Lord God."
31. (The flax and barley were destroyed, since the barley had headed and the flax was in bloom.
32. The wheat and spelt, however, was not destroyed, because they ripen later.)
33. Then Moses left Pharaoh and went out of the city. He spread out his hands toward the Lord, the thunder and hail stopped, and rain no longer poured down on the land.
34. When Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail and thunder had stopped, he sinned again: He and his officials hardened their hearts.
35. So Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the Lord had said through Moses.

Answer to Prayer: ☺

God protected my job and showed his mighty power. Though I had no church or Bible in those days, he manifested the same great mighty power in my job situation that he had showed thousands of years ago. God by his mighty power, made each of my bosses stubborn and they hardened their hearts against each other and kept me in my job. I prayed to be able to keep that job until it was my time to travel to my home country of India and I prayed to get a reference letter. I continued to work there a little longer. Chris gave me files to work on. Then it was time to visit India and we mutually decided to terminate my job and Chris gave me an excellent letter of reference which helped me to get other jobs when I returned from India.

This helped me to believe in my heart that:

Hebrews: 13: 8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

If you like please join with me in prayer.

Prayer: *God, bless my employer! God, bless all employers!*

Dear Lord Jesus, I pray for my readers, especially for those who are struggling in their work place that they will see your mighty work and find favour with their superiors and employers. Amen!



CHAPTER 4

OUR FIRST CHURCH

One day, we received an invitation in our mail box from a Christian church. We were delighted to visit them for the first time in our life. It was an experience quite different from visiting a Jain temple.

As we entered the church, greeters welcomed us and assisted us to the service. We sat and listened to the speakers and sang songs with them. To my surprise, the people in this church were singing songs that were my testimonies, the stories of my encounter with the Lord Jesus. They were strangers and I had not told them anything about what Jesus had done in my life and I couldn't figure out how they were singing the songs of my testimonies! I wondered how they had found out about what the Lord had done in my life! I was totally flabbergasted. There was one song that described how awesome God is and how great his power is. This really touched my heart because I had seen that miracle working power of God in my personal life. There were many other songs that I could relate with as most of them seem to describe my experience with the Lord. I was so glad that somebody had written songs from my heart explaining my experiences with the Lord. People were very friendly and they talked to us after the service and we felt welcomed there. We felt we belonged there. We were very thankful. It gave us a chance to communicate with other Christian people and learn about the Bible. Pastor Matthew and his wife Chrystal were very friendly. Jesus knew what we needed. We were happy to go to this church, learning new songs and scriptures, and meeting with Christian people.

Thank you, Church! God, prosper our church!



The atmosphere in the church was completely different from the atmosphere in a Jain temple. It was very unusual to receive an invitation in a mailbox to go to a church because that was the one and the only time we ever received an invitation in the mail. The Lord knew what we needed and he gave it to us before we asked for it. Although, most of the people in this church were white, they were

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

very friendly towards us. So, I will call this church my Home Church. God provided our need for a church before we asked, just as the scripture says:

Ephesians 3: 20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.

I would like to pray for my readers who do not have any church. Please join with me if you like.

Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that you will help people to find a good church where they will be welcome and comfortable and be spiritually uplifted. Amen!

Lord, I also pray for the churches that truly worship you and deliver your message to the congregation that you will give them wisdom how to invite the new believers in their church to strengthen their faith and make them feel welcome. Lord, I also pray that the church will also invite non-believers as well as people of different faith and bring them to your knowledge. Amen!

Let your people come together in love, unity and harmony, O Lord!

May your Holy name be glorified in every church!



Lord! Prosper your church!

CHAPTER 5

UNFORGETTABLE TRIP

Our Tickets:

Then, we planned to visit India to take advantage of free tickets for children up to six years of age. The agent gave us tickets to fly via Pacific Airline from British Columbia to Hong Kong with a night stay in Hong Kong, and the next day from Hong Kong to Bombay via British Airlines. The airlines paid for our stay in Hong Kong. It sounded very simple, but it didn't turn out that way. We did not have any Bible so far. However, Pastor Roberts from the Faith City had taught us a Bible verse in his letter, to which I paid no attention. He had taught us:

John 10: 10

“The thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

As we arrived at the Hong Kong airport, my elder son jumped up and down yelling, “Daddy, where have you brought me? I never told you to bring me here! I want to go back to Canada!” The children didn't like anything there! The airline promised that we would get our entire luggage in Hong Kong, so we decided to travel lightweight enabling us to hold tightly to the hands of two small children (3 years and 5 years old). The plane arrived in Hong Kong several hours later than the scheduled time and after waiting for many hours in the airport with our disappointed children, searching for our luggage, we found that the airline did not bring our luggage at all. It was past midnight and we were tired. We went to the hotel empty handed.

Here we were! In a crowded city of Hong Kong!



OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

The hotel was comfortable with showers and towels. We took showers and put on our sweaty dirty clothes. Next morning we prepared to go shopping. My elder son jumped up and down protesting, "Daddy, I am staying in the hotel. I am not going shopping; there is no room on the sidewalk to walk for me. You go." We dragged him along and bought a few items of essential clothing.

The next morning, my husband checked with British Airlines to confirm our seats. To our shocking surprise, we found out that the British Airlines no longer went from Hong Kong to Bombay. There was not a single airline going to Bombay on that day! We were advised that we could line up the day after to see if any other airline would accept our tickets from British Airlines, or we might have to buy brand new tickets. We were heartbroken and went to the hotel manager to arrange for an extra day in the hotel, but the hotel manager yelled at us, "This room is booked, out you go!"

I was too busy caring for my two sons so my husband had to do everything by himself. He called many hotels. Very few people spoke English. Hotels were booked. There was no vacancy. He spent hours on the phone. It was scary. We were about to be homeless, wandering on the streets in a foreign country.

There was one scripture that Pastor Roberts had ingrained in my mind was:

Matthew 18: 19, 20

19. "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.

20. For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them."

We prayed together and claimed the promise of the Bible as taught by Pastor Roberts:

Philippians 4: 19

My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Answer to Prayer: ☺

Finally, we found one hotel with vacancy. We went in. They gave us two bunk beds in one small room.

My Complaint:

We had no windows in our room and we had to share toilets and showers for men and toilets and showers for women, with other tenants down the hallway. They did not provide us with any towels. We had toiled to buy some clothes the day before. Alas! We didn't buy towels because the previous hotel provided us with them. We were able to put on clean clothes but couldn't take showers without towels, in a sweaty hot climate.

It reminds me of how Mary and Josef had to go from place to place for the birth of baby Jesus. There was no vacancy and she had to give birth to her precious child in a manger.

Luke 2: 7

And she gave birth to her first born, a son. She wrapped him in strips of cloth and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Jesus was placed in a manger, but we had comfortable beds to sleep in. I should have been thankful because we had a roof over our heads and we did not have to roam around on the streets of a foreign country. I grumbled about our inconvenience instead of thanking God for his providence!

The next day, there were a few airlines going to Bombay. While I took care of my sons, my husband lined up at one airline after another, in vain. Either they had no extra seats or they wanted

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

us to buy a brand new ticket. Then we prayed amidst all the turmoil of various languages all around us.

Answer to Prayer:

We fly away! 😊



Lord, protect all flights and prosper all airlines!

Then, he went to the line-up of Air India. They accepted our British Airlines tickets, gave us seats without any extra charge and we arrived in Bombay, India. Hallelujah! God did answer our prayers in a place full of noise, turmoil and chaos! The airport was totally noisy and I just could not comprehend how Jesus could hear our prayers in such a noisy atmosphere, but he did.

When we arrived in India, we told our family members about all the hardships we had suffered on our trip. At that time, I did not realize it that I was very ungrateful to God who gave us a roof over our heads. We did not roam around on the strange streets of that foreign country like homeless people and God brought us back to Bombay without incurring an extra charge for the tickets!! God was gracious and He kept His promise, but I was ungrateful, ☹️ complaining about all the troubles we went through. Praise God, He has forgiven me for my ungratefulness! 😊 It was like history was repeating itself again. Here is a short passage of history from the Bible.

Numbers 14: 11

The Lord said to Moses, “How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them?”

Numbers 14: 20

The Lord replied, “I have forgiven them, as you asked.” 😊

Sickness: ☹️

While we were staying with our various relatives on both sides, I once again encountered the bleeding problem. The Lord Jesus had healed me from that sickness and it came back again. My

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

doctor sister Lata immediately attended to me and she gave me pills and injections to bring it under control. 😊

Thank You, Sister! 😊



Thank you, doctor! 😊

Over all, we had a good time in India, but it did not fulfill the very purpose I had gone to India for. I had a very deep desire to tell everyone what Jesus had done for me, but somehow, I could not open my mouth to give a testimony for the Lord, mainly because of the sickness that came back upon me and partly because I focused more on the hardships of our trip, rather than the answers to our prayers.

We returned back to BC comfortably. Back in our home town, our time was spent looking for work. Then, I also noticed that I had experienced no more bleeding problem for some time. I felt, I was healed again. This made me wonder why. Why was I sick in Bombay? How did the sickness go away? I kept thinking. I will talk about it more in later chapters. If you like, please pray with me.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I pray for my readers, especially for those who are travelling that you will keep them in good health, protect their belongings and provide all their needs, especially health, nutrition, proper accommodation, protection, safety and finances. I also pray that they will find favor with airlines and all modes of transportation, as well as with hotels, motels and strangers in foreign countries. Amen!



Lord, help us to welcome the foreigners and let the foreigners welcome us.

CHAPTER 6

JOBS, HEALTH & SECURITY

God's Ways:

My husband had a few accounts and he worked from home. I looked for a job. I had a desire to work for a well-known income tax firm preparing tax returns. I prayed to find work there. They gave me a job. They asked me to make photocopies instead of preparing tax returns. I did the boring job for a few days with the hope that I might be able to talk to them into giving me the position I wanted. But it didn't work out that way. I brought this matter before the Lord. The Lord prompted me to read the paper.

Then I found an advertisement for a tax preparer. I called the employer and he gave me an interview. As I was going, God said to me, this is the job for you.

It Helps to Know Someone in Higher Authority: ☺

I have often heard people saying, "It doesn't matter how much you know or what you know, but what matters is whom you know. You have to have a right connection to get a job, know some influential people to get a job." I didn't quite agree with what people said. I always believed that you have to demonstrate that you have the knowledge and skills to acquire a job. But I was proved wrong in this situation.

I had a beautiful resume prepared with excellent letters of reference. I also had a sample of an accounting project that I used to take with me when I went for an interview to show it to a prospective employer to impress the interviewer. I carried a small brief case with me with all my lovely work.

I went for my interview. As soon as I got out of my car, I realized I forgot my brief case at home. I had no resume or reference letters or anything with me. Alas! I blew it. I went for the interview empty handed. The interviewer Mr. Amin asked me if I had any resume with me and I said "no" and I felt stupid. He asked me for my full name, address, and telephone number and he said that he would let me know. He did not ask me anything about income tax, accounting, or any other job related questions.

I went home very disappointed. I thought that I had blown it. I was stupid not to carry my resume with me. Who in the world would give a job to someone by asking for the name, address and telephone number? I cried before God because I blew my perfect chance to get that position. I had no hope of getting that job where I didn't present myself well.

Next day, Mr. Amin called me to meet with him at his branch office. Wow, that was positive! I thought God had listened to me and now I would have a second perfect chance to present myself and show my abilities for the position in the second interview! I said to myself, this time, I am not going to blow it. I took everything with me and met him at the appointed time. I was looking forward to giving some intelligent answers to his work related questions. I prayed to get hired.

Answer to Prayer: ☺

God, bless my employer!

When I arrived there, he did not ask me any questions but told me my salary and gave me the key to this new office! Mr. Amin paid me more than the other well-known tax firm! I managed and was in charge of the entire office! I had to report directly to Mr. Amin. This office was close to my home! And it was 9 to 5 job. Only Monday to Friday! No late hours! Perfect!

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Wow! Now I started believing people when they said, "It doesn't matter what you know or how much you know! It matters whom you know! You have to have the right connections to get an employment, know some influential people to find a position. Hallelujah! I knew the most influential man the Lord Jesus Christ and that's all that was accounted for, in this case.

Wow, God had better plans for me than the plans I had for myself! Hallelujah! Sometime later, I learned the following scripture and I began to understand how God works.

Isaiah 55: 8, 9

8. 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways, my ways,' declares the Lord.

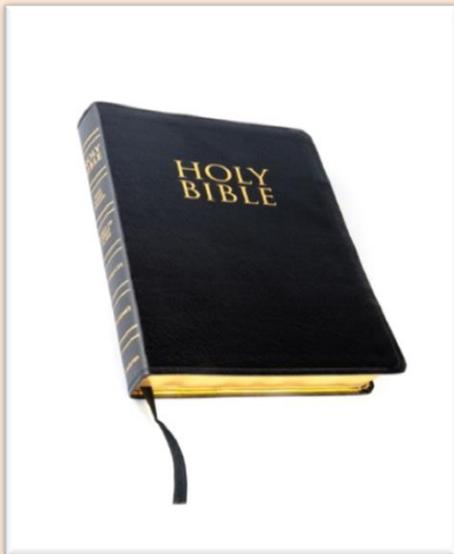
9. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than yours and my thoughts than your thoughts.'

I thoroughly enjoyed working and learning all on my own, there. Because, this position was temporary only for the tax season, I continued to look for other jobs and I found one before the end of this tax season. So, my husband worked in my place. Mr. Amin gave me an excellent reference letter, as I had prayed.

Our First Bibles: ☺

God helped me find another work with higher pay, which I thoroughly enjoyed, though it was a long way to travel.

God, bless our church!



It took me an hour and half to go and an hour and a half to come back by bus. By now, my church had given us a New Testament of the Bible and it was the perfect time while travelling to read my Bible for the first time in my life. The New Testament was easy to understand and there I could see Jesus and His miracle working power and it was exciting to read. The church also gave us 'Good News Bible' which contained Old and New Testament but I couldn't find time to read the Old Testament for some time. Thank you, Church! For the free Bibles! "...Freely you have received; freely give." Matthew 10: 8

I worked in a small firm of Chartered Accountants, very efficiently and my boss was very pleased. I kept asking for more files and my boss realized I had finished all the files. Therefore, he laid me off with an excellent letter of reference. By this time, I had finished reading the New Testament of the Bible during my bus rides. I am thankful to my church for giving us free Bibles.

Temporary Jobs: *May God bless all the employers and prosper them!*

I found one job after another. I was getting tired of looking for work all the time. Some jobs were terminated because they were difficult for me to handle and some jobs were terminated because I was too efficient and the work was finished earlier than expected. I was not getting permanent work. Although each time I was getting higher pay, I was concerned about my security. I felt very

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

threatened with all the short term positions. So, I brought this matter before the Lord. I told him that I was sick and tired of looking for jobs all the time. I wanted permanent employment.

God asked me, "Why do you want a permanent employment?" I said, "I don't have any security. I will be secure if I have a permanent job." And God said, "Your security is not in a permanent job. Your security is in 'Me'. You need to trust me." So, I continued with short term job after job.

Someone may ask me, "How do you hear God's voice?" I can only explain through the scripture.

John 10: 27

'My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.'

Again, the Bible gives many scriptures about safety and security in God.

Proverbs 18: 10

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

Sickness & Healing:

At some point in time, the same sickness from which I was delivered by our precious Lord Jesus came back to me. I went to the doctor who advised me to have a hysterectomy. I saw a few more specialists. They were all of one accord, except one doctor. She was the only one who said, I could be healed by iron and vitamin pills. So, I took them. The hospital booked me for the surgery several months later. I called my sister Lata, my trustworthy medical doctor, in India. She sent me some medicines and I started the course of pills. She advised me, not to rush into the surgery. Meanwhile, I went to the library and brought a few books on hysterectomies. As I read them, it opened my eyes. I came to know that many women in America go through this surgery and suffer. Many surgeons do this surgery, simply for monetary gain where the disease can be remedied by medicines. I continued to pray and ask God to heal me.

I also learned through my observation that whenever I went by a closet in one of the rooms of my apartment, where we kept Jain and Hindu idols and pictures of gods in a box, the sickness came back to me. I discussed this with my husband and we both decided that we would give up these idols. We then removed them. I was awakened to the idea that I was not finding favor with Jesus by keeping those idols and pictures in my home.

At this time, we were not familiar with what the Bible said about idols. Our church had given us a New Testament which I read during my bus rides to work. Yet, I had not digested what the Bible says about idols. I believe that the Holy Spirit was working in our minds and hearts and we were prompted to forsake all idols.

Sometime later, I learned that God hates idol worship. And God was not pleased that I had kept those idols in my home. Then, I read the following in the Old Testament.

Exodus: 20: 3 to 6

3. You shall have no other gods before me.

4. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in the heaven above or the earth beneath or in the waters below.

5. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,

6. But showing love to thousands who love me and keep my commandments.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

When the time for the surgery approached, I was already healed by the medicines that my sister had sent me and I cancelled the surgery. ☺ Pastor Roberts had taught us the Bible verse through his letters:

Matthew 9: 12

.....Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need the doctor, but the sick."

Pastor Roberts had explained that when we are sick, we must pray as well as seek for a doctor's advice. What I understand from his teaching is that God approves of our medical science, home remedies, and many other methods that mankind has devised for the healing of sickness. However, when our man made efforts fail, we can still depend upon God to heal us. We can also pray for our doctors to receive wisdom from God. Man can fail but God does not fail. There were three things that gave me my complete healing without surgery.

1. Prayers from Pastor Roberts and our prayers.
2. Forsaking the idols which meant obeying the Holy Spirit and the word of God.
3. The medicines that my sister sent me, which was treatment from a good physician.

Hallelujah! God's word is true! It has been more than twenty years now and I have never had a hysterectomy and I am totally healed in that area of my health. I must say that at the time we got rid of idols, we weren't mature enough to know what the Bible says concerning idols. We learned it later.

Powerless Idols:

I was concerned about my next visit to India that I might get the sickness again because there would be idols everywhere I went. The Lord told me to claim the blood of Jesus upon myself and nothing could harm me. Idols have no power to harm me. I understood that idols do not have any power to either heal or make someone sick. Here are some scriptures talking about powerless idols.

Jeremiah 10: 3 to 5

3. for the customs of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and craftsman shapes it with his chisel.

4. They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter.

5. Like a scarecrow in a melon patch, their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good.

However, when people worship idols or keep them, they encounter the loss of God's healing power because it is against the will of God. When someone is in the presence of idols not by choice and not worshipping them, claiming the blood of Jesus gives assurance that the person does not believe or worship the idol and therefore, does not offend the command of God. Here are some scriptures that explain the power in the blood of Jesus.

1 John 1: 7

If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his son, purifies us from every sin.

Matthew 26: 28

This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Ephesians 1: 7, 8

7. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

8. That he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

Leviticus 17: 11, 12

11. For the life of a creature is in the blood and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

12. Therefore I say to the Israelites, 'None of you may eat blood, nor may an alien living among you eat blood.'

Although idols have no power, they are contrary to the will of God and therefore, when we entertain idols or keep idols in our home, we fail to win favor with God. When we are in the presence of idols, claiming the blood of Jesus on us, we spiritually separate ourselves from the idols even though we may be near idols, not by choice but by circumstances. By spiritually separating ourselves from idols, we find favor with God.

I would like to pray for my readers; please join with me if you like.

Prayer:

Father God, I come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and Savior **and by the authority of his precious blood.** Father, I pray for my readers and their loved ones that you will keep them in good health and prosper them according to your words: ***Worship the Lord your God and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you. – Exodus 23:25.*** Lord Jesus, I pray that you will provide them with employment and finances to support their families, according to your words: ***'My Lord shall supply all your needs in his riches in glory – by Christ Jesus.'*** **Philippians 4:19**

There is power in the blood!



His blood was poured out for the forgiveness of our sins.

CHAPTER 7

PRIDE GOES BEFORE DESTRUCTION

The Promised Job:

Then, I started working for a big collection agency. I was one of twenty new employees hired. During my prayer time, the Lord spoke to me that it would be my permanent job, with a warning that I would have to go through many troubles. Some people may have trouble understanding how I hear God's voice. I cannot explain the experience of listening. I can explain only through the scriptures:

John 10: 27

'My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.'

Matthew 28: 20

"and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age." –

It is comforting to know that God has promised that he will be with us all the time and we hear his still small voice.

Office Environment:

My job went well with my first supervisor Lyle. He prepared a nice work review report on my performance. Then, we had another supervisor named Rick who did not treat me well and I felt he was discriminating against me.

Bible Class:

Meanwhile, we were attending a new Christians' Bible class in our church. Pastor Matthew asked us if we wanted to baptize. I had not understood baptism well. I declined his offer. My husband also said, "I will not go that far!" All this time, I had great faith and I had developed a sound prayer life, but I was not mature enough in God's words, the Bible. I didn't understand baptism well. Besides, coming from Jain background, we didn't have anything like baptism.

Harassment at Work: ☹

Right from the beginning, I was treated like a 'black sheep' in the eyes of my second supervisor Rick. We were twenty people under him. We were sitting in groups of four with four desks arranged in a circular fashion, all joined at a center. **Our boss Rick provided a calculator for everybody (to all nineteen colleagues in my group), except me. This was not fair at all.** I was supposed to share the calculator with my colleague Debbie who sat on my right hand side. Rick informed me that they did not have enough calculators so I needed to share with Debbie. She being right handed kept the calculator on her right hand side for her convenience. I had to get up and walk around her to do my calculations. **I could not use the calculator while sitting on my chair but she was able to use the calculator while sitting on her chair. This wasn't fair at all.** I suggested her to keep the calculator in the middle of us. That way, neither of us would have to get up and walk. But she did not agree to it. Although, supervisor Rick kept his family picture with his wife and children at his desk, he was flirting

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

with Debbie and did not want to displease her. Therefore, he also didn't agree with my suggestion. Rick also accused me of not getting along with my colleague because of my request to keep the calculator in the middle of us. At the end of the day, we were also required to make a final report and give the statistics about the quantity of work done. The evaluation of our work was done based on accuracy and production. Not having a calculator, to perform my duties, was a hindrance to my work efficiency. We were going through a few training periods during that time. Rick did not answer me properly when I had some questions and he continuously made derogatory remarks.

Then, he prepared a work review report. When I read it, I went to discuss with him. He avoided discussing his comments on my files and expected me to accept his remarks without question. I cannot describe the discriminatory treatment he gave me during that time. Then, he made a terrible performance review report on me. It seemed so inappropriate that anybody without any knowledge of my work could also determine that Rick was totally unjust in writing that report. I went home heartbroken and cried.

Health Problems: ☹️

In addition to Rick's harsh treatment, I also encountered a severe attack of asthma due to allergies, as it was spring time. I occasionally used to get this kind of allergy during spring. However, at that time, it was unusually severe and I had much trouble with breathing. I did not want to miss any training, so I hardly took any sick days off from work.

My husband also had severe allergies, a runny nose and colds at that time due to the pollen season.

Misery at Work: ☹️

God had warned me about this job that I would go through many troubles, but he would be with me. I prayed and gathered some courage to go back to work, day after day. Rick kept harassing me every single day. One day, it reached a peak, totally unbearable. I felt, as if he was taking my blood out of me and I had no blood left. I couldn't stand him anymore and I thought about going home on the grounds of being sick. Then, I decided to wait and seek for God's guidance during my coffee break.

Our Baptism in Spirit & Water: 😊

During coffee break, I went out and found a nice quiet sunny spot and sat there, to pray. During that short ten minutes break, God overwhelmed me by diagnosing and showing the problem in my body and then healing me.

Diagnosis: I came to realize, that the supervisor Rick's treatment towards me, had affected all the muscles in my body, causing them to be extremely tight and painful as if holding a tight fist. The blood vessels in my body had been pinched and clogged at different points so that it resisted the blood flow. The nerves in my body were all tangled with each other and there were knots at various points in my nerves, restricting my capacity to think. There was no communication between the brain and the various organs in my body and my entire nervous system was like tangled threads.

Healing & Restoration: 😊 After God showed me the problem in my body and mind, his amazing peace and joy overwhelmed me. I felt that all the muscles in my body were relaxed. I felt, I was just refreshed from a restful nap. I also experienced that my blood vessels were no more pinched and the blood was able to flow freely in my body from head to toe. There was no more clogging. I could actually hear the sound of blood flowing just as water flows through a streambed. I felt my blood circulation was totally restored. Then, I felt that the nerves in my brain were becoming untangled and the passage way was clear and I experienced that a great communication system was established

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

between my brain and other organs in my body. I felt that my nerves were able to carry messages from my brain to various organs in my body and back to the brain. The power of the communication system in my brain with the rest of my body was beyond description. The joy that I experienced in my heart, mind and soul was out of this world. I had never experienced such tremendous joy in my life. I was also able to breathe and the asthma was completely gone. There were many changes inside of my body that I cannot describe. Probably it must have affected my outward countenance.

By this time, I had read the New Testament of the Bible once during my bus ride, but my knowledge of the Bible was too shallow to understand what had happened. First, I thought the sunshine had made all that difference. Now, I know that it was the Holy Spirit of God who filled me with His peace that passes all understanding with amazing joy. I was made whole, during the ten minutes of prayer in my coffee break. However, at the time when I experienced this supernatural joy and peace, I did not know much about the Holy Spirit because I hadn't matured in my Bible study. Later, I found following verses that matched my experience.

Romans 14: 17

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15: 13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 4: 7

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Acts 9: 34 KJV

Peter said to him: 'Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole, arise and make thy bed, and he arose immediately.'

I was made whole just like Aeneas. I had strength, energy, clear thinking and wisdom to cope with the situation and function with accuracy and I experienced tremendous joy.

Psalm 16: 11

You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Psalm 4: 7

You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound.

I hope and pray that my readers will understand that the joy that I am talking about is not the joy of this world, like winning a lottery ticket, or getting a promotion or buying a new house or a new car. No, this joy was not based on the circumstances nor it was to that level. It was far greater than the joy of birth of a new baby! This joy was regardless of circumstances and beyond comprehension; it knew no bounds! It felt divine.

After my ten minute coffee break, I went to my desk and did not feel the need to go home. I was able to do all my work with the same supervisor and in the same environment. As I continued to work, tremendous joy filled my heart so that all the duties of my work became interesting and I was able to perform with greater efficiency and accuracy and without tiredness or boredom. As Peter explained in the book of Acts, I was made 'whole' with tremendous peace which was far beyond what a mind can understand.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Because of my personal experience with the Holy Spirit one of the songs that we often sing in the church, became my favorite song. The song described that the joy of the Lord, was, as if the heaven had come down and my soul was filled with the glory of the Lord where I was made whole.

I agree, I know and I understand, what it means to say that 'Heaven came down' and what it means to say that 'Glory filled my soul' and what it means 'to be made whole'. I had experienced that my sorrow was turned into joy and it was heavenly. It is all beyond description; one must experience the joy of the Holy Spirit and God!

My Husband's Experience: ☺

At home, because of severe colds and allergies, my husband started to pray for God's healing, as he was very encouraged by the testimony of Nita Edwards on the television show 100 Huntley Street, produced by Crossroads Christian Communications Inc. He was also encouraged by reading several small books from Rev. Bill Bright that we were able to obtain through our church.

He described to me that when he prayed, all the cold and allergy symptoms disappeared. They came back after a few hours and then he prayed again. He prayed again and again and finally it reached a point where all the allergies and colds disappeared completely and he felt he was surrounded by a shower of love. The experience was out of this world, so amazing that he did not want to get out of it. ☺ He also felt a fountain flowing out of his belly. ☺ So he called Pastor Matthew who explained that he was filled by the Holy Spirit. Here is the scripture that described his experience.

John 7: 38

Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.

He also informed the pastor that he wanted to baptize. When we were filled by the Holy Spirit, the whole world was a beautiful place, despite our circumstances. My spirit was lifted up and there was joy all around me and I was communicating with Jesus all the time.

Once when I was driving down the road, the Lord told me that I should be baptized. I came home and called Pastor Matthew and told him that I wanted to be baptized.

We were both baptized on the same day, Easter of 1981. This happened just about a week after we had expressed to him that we didn't want to be baptized. Pastor Matthew gave us a card of Baptism with a scripture that was very appropriate to the circumstances that I was going through at the time.

Matthew 11: 28 to 30

28. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.

29. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

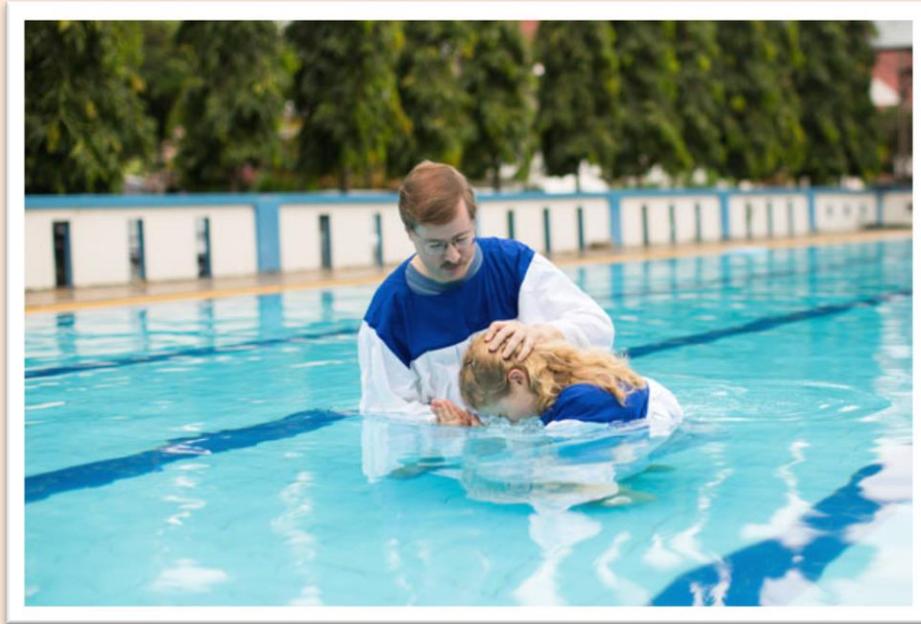
It is unusual and often shocking for a man and a woman who have been raised in Jain families to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son (Jesus) and the Holy Spirit. I had not yet read the Old Testament of the Bible when we were baptized. Experience with the Holy Spirit gave us the zeal to know more about the Bible and I was surprised to find the following scripture in the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 65: 1

I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, 'Here am I, here I am'.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Thank you, Pastor! Thank you, Holy Spirit!



Yes, we were both baptized because we were led by the Holy Spirit but I was very immature and naïve in many aspects of Christianity. When I told some people that I was a Christian, they asked me simple questions that I didn't have the answers to. I didn't know the difference between Catholics and Protestants and I didn't know anything about the denominations. People asked me if I was Baptist or Anglican or Pentecostal and I didn't have the answer. I didn't know what that was all about. All I knew was that I was a Christian and I followed Jesus Christ. Our Home church never explained to us about any denominations and I did not know that denominations existed. I just thought there were different names for different churches. But the beautiful thing is that God loves a naïve person and for my church, the Bible and following Christ was more important than denominations! Hallelujah!

Dealing With the Unjust Review:

I needed to deal with the unjust performance review report that Rick had prepared, assessing my work. First, I cried. Then, I prayed. The Lord comforted me. He told me to go and see Chris, my first employer, in the Chartered Accountants' office. God also told me that he would give me his comments on this report that will be useful. Because of God's instructions, I had the courage to show such an inappropriate report to my ex employer. When Chris read it, he totally disagreed with my supervisor Rick. He suggested that I should write a letter to Rick's supervisor concerning his report. He assured me that he will give me his comments on this unjust review.

On the advice of Chris, I wrote a letter to Rick's supervisor explaining to him about the unjust treatment I had received from Rick and the inaccuracy of his assessment. My faith in God had made me strong to withstand his discriminative behavior. However, I was not grounded in the Bible. I had read the New Testament only once during my bus rides, but I had not digested it thoroughly. I had great faith in the Lord and in the power of prayer but I was not a mature Christian.

Disobedience & Stupidity: ☹

During my prayers, God told me that He wanted me to spend my first coffee break with him every day, at work. Every morning before going to work, I prayed. Every night before going to bed, I prayed. I thought that it was enough.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

At work, I was more tempted to sit down with my colleagues to get to know them and socialize with them. I didn't really want to be alone and look like a loner. I was struggling with God's advice and my desire. Sometimes, I ignored God's advice and sometimes I went to pray in my coffee break; maybe when I had lots of trouble with the supervisor and I needed Jesus, I spent time with him.

I was stupid to ignore the beautiful experience that God had given me for the sake of my colleagues whom I knew very little. Most of them liked to please the supervisor.

Once, our training group was sitting at one table, during lunch time, and Debbie insulted me. ☹️ She told me to sit far from her because she couldn't endure the smell of my food which had onions and garlic and Indian spices in it. The smell of my food was like an appetizing fragrance to me and I often could not endure the smell of beef or fish, but I didn't insult people who were eating beef or fish. During those difficult days in the office, I read a few pages from 'Our Daily Bread', small booklets produced by Radio Bible Class and given to us from our church. Each page in that booklet was comforting and gave me strength to face the hardships at work. 😊 *Thanks for 'Our Daily Bread'.*

After a long time, I came to understand why God wanted me to spend one coffee break with him despite the fact that I spent hours in prayers with the Lord, at home.

Matthew 10: 37

Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Jesus wants us to love him more than even our father, mother and children. He definitely wants us to love him more than our colleagues.

Matthew 10: 32, 33

32. Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

33. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

Am I going to put Jesus first or my colleagues? I should not disown him before the people I work with. I must acknowledge Jesus. Making a commitment to spend time with my Lord instead of spending time with my colleagues was pleasing to the Lord. I must put Jesus first above everything else. After a long time, I understood this. It was a test the Lord put me through. Do I love my Lord more than my colleagues? Am I willing to be a loner in the office for the sake of spending time with my Lord? Is the Lord, my companion in the work place? Is my Lord, the best companion at work? He didn't really ask too much from me, just ten minutes out of one of my two coffee breaks! He did not even ask me to spend my lunch time with him!

I think that the Lord likes to test us as to how much we love him. There is an example in the Bible when Jesus asked Peter several times if he truly loved Jesus.

John 21: 15

When they had finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Then, Jesus asked him the same question a few times.

Report of Rick's Conduct:

As per the advice from my ex employer Chris, I wrote a letter to Jack, Rick's supervisor. I thought I was able to give a complete picture to Jack about what was happening at work. I truly believed that it would open his eyes and that he would do something about it to remedy the problem, and bring justice. I felt proud that my writing was like a three dimensional picture that explained the

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

situation very clearly. I was looking for justice. But at the same time, I was proud. Because, I thought that in my letter to Jack, I had skillfully and cleverly thrown some light on the department's faulty manuals and the inaccuracy of Rick's report and exposed Rick's misconduct. I handed the letter to Jack as soon as I had finished it. As I remember it, I used sarcastic tone towards Rick and I was laughing. I was proud about it.

Unfulfilled Promise: ☹

Next day, Jack called me into his office and I was expecting a good solution to the problem. But alas! I was fired. They gave me one week's extra pay but did not allow me to work or come into their building because I had exposed faulty manuals of the department. They took away all the instruction manuals and my picture identification to enter their building and my parking pass to enter their parking lot.

This made me very depressed. The sky had fallen on me and under its heavy weight I lay crushed and depressed for a long time. I was disappointed with God for not keeping his promise to me about my job being permanent.

My husband took me to Pastor Matthew's home. Matthew and his wife Chrystal prayed for me. *Thank you, Chrystal and Mathew!* My sorrow was too deep to be comforted. I had trusted God to keep his promise and was ready to fight the battle and ready to endure the hardship but he didn't give me a chance.

In his home, there was a picture of Jesus and I saw tears in his eyes. I did not understand if they were real or psychological. I had seen this picture in his home before but I did not recall seeing tears in his eyes prior to this. Following scripture, explains the tears in the eyes of Jesus.

Jeremiah 13: 15 to 17

15. Hear and pay attention, do not be arrogant, for the Lord has spoken.

16. Give glory to the Lord your God before he brings darkness, before your feet stumble on the darkening hills. You hope for light, but he will turn it to thick darkness and change it to deep gloom.

17. But if you do not listen, I will weep in secret because of your pride; my eyes will weep bitterly overflowing with tears, because the Lord's flock will be taken captive.

The Price of Pride: ☹

Why did God not keep his promise to me? Was it because of my pride? At the time it happened, I was not aware of such consequences of pride. Now, I understand that I did not give glory to God in helping me to write a letter which was as effective as a three dimensional picture. I questioned myself. Did I hear God's voice, or was it my imagination? Now, I was confused about my faith in the Lord. Sometime later, my neighbor Heather showed me a scripture. It was a good lesson that I learned from her to always test the spirit to see whether it be from God or not.

1 John 4: 1, 2, 3 KJV

1. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

3. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

To this day, I am of the opinion that God did promise me that job. I believe that I listened to God and not a false spirit. Maybe, it was because of my pride that God allowed me to suffer injustice. God's promise to me remains unfulfilled to this day.

Jeremiah 13: 9

This is what the Lord says: 'In the same way I will ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.'

I think that the key to success would have been to remain humble and trust in the Lord that he will work it out for me. Mistakenly, I had trusted in my ability to throw light on the faulty manuals of my company and exposing the errors in calculations of the statistical data of the department and his misconduct. Mistakenly, I had hoped for victory rather than reconciliation and harmony!

Proverbs 29: 23

A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.

These scriptures helped me to understand that my pride had brought me to ruin.

Ecclesiastes 9: 18

Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.

I had prayed for victory but not for reconciliation and harmony. However, the way he treated me, it was impossible to think of reconciliation and harmony. I was not a mature Christian and did not pray according to the Lord's will and didn't know that our God is powerful to help us reconcile when there is no hope.

Certainly, I had failed to know his will.

1 John 5: 14, 15

14. This is the assurance we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

15. And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-we know that we have what we asked of him.

Wilderness: ☹

At the time I got fired, I did not understand why it had happened to me. Thoughts of unbelief surfaced in my mind. I was crushed and started doubting my faith in the Lord. I thought of giving up on Christianity. There was no joy in my heart. The Jain teaching: "the entire creation is useless and based on selfishness" - came alive in my mind. I stayed crushed in my spirit for many days. I experienced wilderness in my soul. This happened shortly after we were both baptized joyfully in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Then, I found the scripture where Jesus was also led into wilderness, after he was baptized.

Matthew 3: 16:

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

Matthew 4: 1

'Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.'

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

This wilderness was too hard to endure!



Was I tempted by the devil? Maybe, because of my pride as I thought, I had cleverly exposed errors in statistical data and faulty manual of the company with examples and diagrams! Now, I was tempted to think that Christianity was no good any more. Immediately, the Jain teaching came alive to me that all relationships are based on selfishness and that pure love does not exist in the world. Surely, almost immediately, after I received the Holy Spirit of God and was baptized, I was led into the experience of the spiritual wilderness of my soul.

I know a few other people who have been led into the wilderness after being baptized. Those who are getting baptized, I feel the need to warn them about the wilderness experience that may follow after baptism. Jesus was tempted but he resisted the temptation whereas I did not resist the temptation of pride. Jesus had victory. I had defeat as I gave into satan's temptation.

I developed some courage to deal with the problem. My job was a union job. But my supervisor Rick himself was my shop steward. I called another shop steward who agreed to file a grievance against Rick. Meanwhile, I stayed unemployed. I prayed. **It is also my prayer today that shop stewards should not be supervisors and supervisors should not be shop stewards.**

I had lost many jobs previously, but as soon as I lost one, I immediately started looking for another job and I usually found another employment, very soon. However, this time, I wanted to regain the same position. I looked for a few openings, but mostly, I spent time working on my grievance. Filing a grievance was also a full time work. I prayed a lot to get my lost position back because it was promised by the Lord. Meanwhile, my former employer, Chris, had sent me his comments on Rick's unjust performance review report which I enclosed with my grievance. His comments were extra ordinary and would open the eyes of the adjudicator. Months went by as I went through several stages of the grievance procedure with the union. I was aware that I could sue my employer for 'wrongful dismissal' and earn a lot of tax-free money. However, it wouldn't serve the purpose of fulfilling God's promise. I wanted my job back at any cost to see God's promise fulfilled.

God Answers someone's Prayer: 😊

My husband was going to a 'home fellowship Bible study group', where he asked one of our friends, Anna, to pray for me to get a job. Anna prayed to our dear Lord that I should get a job. I wasn't aware of it until he disclosed it to me sometime later.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

While I was still fighting to get back my lost job, I received a phone call from an employment agency. I must have applied to this employment agency some years before. Usually they keep the resumes on file for six months, but they found my old resume and called me for an interview. They sent me to an employer and I got hired.

Hallelujah! God provided me with an excellent job. The pay was good, I had my own private office and I received five weeks of fully paid training, the best training I ever received in the accounting field. This employer imported goods from various countries and sold in wholesales to customers. I received very valuable experience doing bookkeeping and accounting with various currencies that I had never dealt with before. I had no boss peering over my shoulder. It was fun doing accounting with Japanese, English, American, Korean, German and all kinds of other currencies. All three directors were pleased with my work.

However, there was one thing lacking in this job. Unlike my previous job, this employer did not offer any scheduled coffee breaks to the employees. Perhaps, God didn't think I deserved to have coffee breaks. Perhaps, I had displeased my Lord by sitting down with my colleagues rather than spending time with Him in one of my coffee breaks.

God's Provision for a Ride: ☺

Our car was not working properly. We had one problem after another and it was just costing us a lot of our money. We often had problems with transportation. Continuously having to do repairs was becoming a financial burden on us. Pastor Matthew and another friend offered to help us fix our car as they had some knowledge in this area.

While the three of them were working on our car, I prayed, asking God to help them fix it so that I could take it to work the next morning. But God told me, "Your car will not be fixed." I pleaded that I needed the car as I could not take the bus. If I was going to take the bus, that would mean I would have to give up my morning exercises, prayers and breakfast and that wasn't fair. Then God told me, "You start from home at the same time you would, if you were to take the car. When you walk, you will find a stranger and he will offer you a ride to your office. Don't be afraid to take the ride."

I trusted the Lord and slept in. My husband came home late and I didn't have the opportunity to discuss the car with him. In the morning, I asked him and he informed me that our car was not fixed, I could not drive. As the Lord had said to me, I took it easy and did all that I needed to do and did not go early to catch the bus but went out at the same time as I would have if I was going to drive. In the parking lot, I met a man and I said, "Good Morning". He responded and he asked me where I was going. I told him that I was going to the bus stop. He said, another bus would not be there for an hour and he offered to take me to the mall where I could catch the next bus. He took me to the Mall and asked me where I needed to go, so I told him the area where I worked. He told me that I wouldn't reach there in time if I took the bus. **Then, he offered to take me to work and I reached work almost on time.** ☺ We also got to know each other on the way and he lived in the same complex.

I thanked the Lord for His provision. But the next day, I started to take the bus for two reasons. Firstly, I doubted that Jesus would provide me rides every single day, just like his disciples doubted.

Mark 8: 17

Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened?

The disciples, after seeing the miracle performed by Jesus of feeding five thousand people from only a small lunch, were still concerned about how they would feed the multitudes. Similarly, after receiving the miracle ride that the Lord provided me, I started doubting if my ride for another day would come. History was repeating itself. My heart was hardened, just like disciples'.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Secondly, I decided to take the bus because it was not in our culture to take advantage of people to get rides from them. It costs them time and money. So, I took the bus and within a few days, I was able to arrange for a ride with one of my colleagues who lived close by. She gave me rides until my car was fixed.

The Bible teaches the same principle as our old culture in which I grew up. Later I also found this scripture in the Bible:

Leviticus 25: 17

“Do not take advantage of each other, but fear your God.” I am the Lord your God.

The stranger (living in my complex) probably would have provided me with a ride for some time. I could have offered him gas money but it didn't strike me coming from a different culture.

My Husband's Practice:

Meanwhile, when the board of directors of our co-operative housing society found out that he was working from home, they gave us a notice to stop doing the business from there as it was contrary to our contract. Although, we were reluctant to open an office and worried about how we would pay the expenses, because the economy of the province had not improved. He had no choice but to open up an office. God blessed us. We found an office with a reasonable rent, close to home.

Adjudication:

Meanwhile, the grievance procedure concerning my job with the collection agency was going on. I had prepared an excellent report about what had transpired in my job and I had prepared a very systematic binder with an index, tabs and diagrams that gave a clear picture to anybody who read it thoroughly. The grievance procedure went through several stages with my shop steward. Now, the final stage was adjudication where the union declined to represent me. So, I decided to represent myself without a lawyer. I had confidence that I could do it. The employer had a lawyer. I thought, I had presented it well and I should have won. The adjudicator also appreciated the fact that I had made a good presentation orally and in writing. I was proud because I thought I had done my job better than their lawyer. However, the adjudicator took a month to make a decision.

End of my Precious Employment: ☹

I was doing well at this company who imported goods. I was proud because I had found favor with the directors of the company. I thought I could easily persuade them to accept my suggestions. It was the month of June and the schools were closing. I thought it would be nice to stay home with my children and work from home. The manual accounting work that I was doing at the place of my employment could easily be done from home. I only needed to go back once or twice a week to collect new papers and deliver the old papers. I explained to one of my directors that my children would be home during vacation and asked if I could work from my home. The director retained only half of my story that I wanted to stay home for my children, so immediately he made arrangements to hire another employee. He asked me to train her and told me that I could terminate my job when school was over. I had no intention of quitting but I could not get a proper opportunity to explain to him about his misunderstanding because his schedule was busy and another employee was already hired. In addition, the new employee he had hired was very rude and arrogant to me that she made it impossible for me to train her. The directors perceived that I was not co-operative with her. One day, during lunch time, I tried to be alone to be with the Holy Spirit to get some guidance about how to handle this situation but I could not find a quiet spot. I was unable to get any guidance. It made me feel as if the Holy Spirit had left me. I searched, but the Holy Spirit was nowhere to be found. Maybe,

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

I had grieved the Holy Spirit, I do not know. But I was not what God wanted me to be. I was not humble. Alas! What an end to my precious employment!

Somewhere along the line, I grieved the Holy Spirit, probably because of my pride. Alas! I missed the Holy Spirit! Though I was not very knowledgeable in Bible scriptures at the time, I can relate to King David's experience when he said:

Psalm 51: 11, 12

11. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.

I felt that God had taken the joy and the Holy Spirit away from me.

Proverbs 1: 28 ☹

Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me.

This was my experience, I called out to God but he did not answer me and I could not find him.

Adjudication Results: ☹

At the end of this job, I received the final result of the adjudicator that I had failed in proving my case and I would not be reinstated with the collection agency. Surely, pride had brought me to my ruin.

Proverbs 11: 2

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

Proverbs 16: 18

Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 29: 23

A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.

My mother had mentioned frequently to remain humble. I tried. Jain scriptures taught us to refrain from pride and it has never been my style to talk proudly with people, so how does God know?

Psalm 94: 11

The Lord knows the thoughts of men. He knows that they are futile.

It took me some time to understand why I had failed but it was a good lesson to learn humility.

James 4: 6

.....God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble.

James 4: 10

Humble yourself before the Lord and He will lift you up.

There is some similarity between Jain and Christian teachings. Jain scriptures also have good moral teachings about humility but they have no Savior or Holy Spirit, whereas Christians have the Lord Jesus our Savior and the Holy Spirit. We can reach out to the throne of God Almighty through

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Jesus and he gives us his Holy Spirit who molds our lives and makes us new creations in Christ. The Holy Spirit is our teacher, he is patient and he teaches us at an appropriate time when we are able to grasp his teachings. Though I went through ups and downs and at times, I felt that the Holy Spirit had left me. In my dark time, God was still with me as he says in his Word: ***“I will never leave you nor forsake you.” Joshua 1:5 & Hebrews: 13:5.***

Jesus was molding my character day by day just as the scripture says:

Jeremiah 18: 1 to 6

- 1. This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord:***
- 2. “Go down to the potter’s house, and there I will give you my message.”***
- 3. So I went down to the potter’s house and I saw him working at the wheel.***
- 4. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as it seemed best to him.***
- 5. Then the word of the Lord came to me.***
- 6. “O house of Israel, Can I not do with you, as this potter does?” declares the Lord. “Like clay in the hand of a potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.***

Then, I stayed home with my children during vacation time. Later, I started to help my husband in his office. Then, another song that we sing in our church became my favorite song. It describes that when we come in contact with Christ we have a new birth and our lives are renewed as our old carnal nature slowly disappears.

The Holy Spirit of God taught me from my experience how important it is to be humble and I began to sing my favorite song from the church which reminds me to remain humble all the time that will please God.

Through all these hardships, God was teaching me and molding my character.

Isaiah 64: 8

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter. We are all the work of your hand.

2 Corinthians 5: 17

Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

This gave me encouragement to sing another favorite song that was taught in my church describing that my old self was diminishing and my spirit was being renewed in Christ.

Before closing this chapter, I would like to pray for my readers, so please join with me if you like.

Prayer:

Father God, I come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and Savior and by the authority of his precious blood. Father, I pray for my readers and their loved ones that you will fill them with your Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, abide in them and live in them and fill them with your peace, love, joy and wisdom that is beyond understanding. I pray that they will recognize and understand the working of the Holy Spirit and that they will be made whole and will be humble to receive God’s full blessings. May they receive and understand the directions of the Holy Spirit. I pray that they will follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and receive the wisdom to never grieve the Holy Spirit. Amen!

CHAPTER 8

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

New Venture:

After I lost this job, I joined my husband in his accounting practice to have flexible hours of work to spend more time with my children. Financially, the first few years were very difficult because the economy of the province was still very poor. It was a test of our faith in God. We prayed every morning for our needs. God provided our needs one step at a time, not in abundance, just like he did for Elijah, the prophet.

1 Kings 17: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,

2. Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah.

3. "Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the ravine of Kerith, east of the Jordan.

4. You will drink from the brook and I have ordered the ravens to feed you there."

5. So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the ravine of Kerith, east of the Jordan, and stayed there.

6. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening and he drank from the brook.

Audit Work:

From the beginning, our Home Church had asked my husband to give free investment consultation and perform free audit work.

Now, I had no income from salary. The economic condition of this province was still poor for any business to prosper. We had overhead expenses of the office. It was very hard for us to make ends meet. As we were just living from hand to mouth, this free audit work bothered me. Often, there was great pressure from Henry, the founder of the church, to produce the audit reports, when at the same time, we had deadlines with the governmental authorities for our clients whose work could bring revenue, for us.

In the course of performing the audit of the church, my husband revealed to me their financial information which brought unrest to me. The church was giving to their pastors and employees large salaries, pension plans, benefits and paid vacations. The Pastor's brother worked as a janitor with a decent hourly wage to pay for Bible College. It seemed totally unfair to me that they had spare money for investments, they had no long term debts, they were paying high salaries to their employees but asking my husband to do free audit work when we were living hand to mouth. The free audit work did not seem to bother my husband, but it did to me but I couldn't say anything, because I didn't do it.

Jesus explains this type of situation in the gospel where the preachers charge money for their preaching; they will not do it for free but expects others to do free work in the name of working for the Lord.

Luke 11: 46

46. Jesus replied: And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

While working for my husband, we did accounting work for many non-profit organizations. I was shocked to see exceptionally large salaries paid to high officials while they claimed their non-profit status. All these made me perceive that non-profit status is created by giving out exceptionally large salaries to high officials to bring organization's net income to almost zero. Under the umbrella of non-profit charitable status, they asked vulnerable people to do volunteer work. This is shameful.

Second Ethnic Church:

Now, we came into contact with pastor Naren who was from India. He operated a small ethnic church where the services were conducted mainly in Hindi and also translated into English. We were invited to his church. We met with his wife Sushila and other believers, who originated from India. We learned many worship songs in Hindi. I will call this our 'Second Ethnic Church'. Our social group of believers enlarged as we attended many Christian camps and picnics with them. It was very exciting. We enjoyed their company and fellowship. We went there only once a month for a communion service as we were already going to our Home Church.

Lord, thank you for the ethnic church!



Communion Service:

Jesus told his disciples to eat bread and drink wine in the memory of his sacrifice of his body and blood. Most churches observe this ritual once a month and some do it every week.

Matthew 26: 26, 27

26. While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat, this is my body."

27. Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

We shared our testimonies with one another. Our spiritual life was very fulfilled and busy with many church activities.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Pastor Naren asked us to become associate members of his church thinking that we were already members of our Home Church, but we weren't, as it was never offered to us.

This Second Ethnic Church also asked my husband to do their audit work for free. For me, this was also financially very hurtful to us as we were held back from giving service to our paying clients.

Family Problems:

Our spiritual growth in the Lord did not solve our financial problems. To add to our financial problems, we started marital and family problems.

It was not easy for me to get along with my husband, being together all the time. Whatever he said, it seemed like criticism to me and it was unbearable. I felt, he was disrespectful towards me. We went to work together and we came home together and we worked in the kitchen together. There was just criticism all day long. How much can a person forgive?

Counseling:

Pastor Matthew talked to both of us but we were not getting anywhere resolving our issues. Pastor Matthew spent a considerable time with us counseling. He showed us the following scriptures.

Matthew 18: 21, 22 *Thank you Pastor, for your Biblical counselling!*

21. Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times will I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

22. Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."

I forgave my husband. It did not change him. Pastor showed us the following scripture where I tried to practice submitting to my husband but he did not seem to follow his part of advice.

Ephesians 5: 22 to 33

22. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

23. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

24. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their own husbands in everything.

25. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

26. to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,

27. and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

28. In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

29. After all no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-

30. for we are members of his body.

31. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh.

32. This is a profound mystery- but I am talking about Christ and the church.

33. However, each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Pastor Naren and Sushila took care of our children, for a weekend, so we could go on a retreat to strengthen our marriage. Their intention was good but it did not change my husband.

Thank you, Pastor Naren and Sushila for your efforts!

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Both pastors prayed for us but my husband did not change. I was hurt a lot and unable to appreciate them for their help to revive our marriage. I did not have a solid foundation in Bible and had not forgotten Jain philosophy. According to Jainism, pure love does not exist and all relationships are based on selfishness. Jain priests never get paid. They do not touch money and here Christian pastors are paid fabulously. This wide contrast was very hard to understand, digest or accept. Therefore, I thought: "These pastors are helping us to bring reconciliation in our marriage while they are drawing full salaries from the church, but they are not paying my husband for his labor to do audit work for the churches!" I was only able to think that their motives were selfish. I did not express to them what I thought. In my opinion, their desire not to pay anything for his labor of the audit work did not sound fair. Because, the scripture clearly tells us:

1 Timothy 5: 18

.....*The worker deserves his wages.*

Chrystal's Visit:

One day, Pastor Matthew's wife, Chrystal, and I were having lunch together. I could not help but talk about our financial difficulties, because we were living from hand to mouth. We were selling our household items to collect money for rent. Chrystal may have mentioned it to pastor Matthew. A few months later, Pastor Matthew sent us a Christmas card with one hundred dollars cash in the envelope. It was nice of him to throw a few dollars but I did not have much gratitude for his actions. However, I kept it to myself what I thought. For me, it was humiliating that instead of receiving at least more than a thousand dollars for only one year's church audit (not considering the last several years of audits) as an earned income, we ended up getting a lousy charity of one hundred dollars that wouldn't even pay for a month's rent!

Praying in tongues:

Once, I discussed our marriage problems with Hannah, a Christian believer. When she prayed, the Holy Spirit led her to 'pray in tongues' and again the power of God touched me.

The Bible talks about speaking in tongues, meaning speaking in a language unknown to the person but given by the Holy Spirit at that time. These examples are given in **Acts 10: 45, 46, 47 and 1 Corinthians 14: 39 & 40.**

Acts 10: 45, 46

45. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.

46. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

When Hannah prayed in tongues for me, God first made me aware of my condition. I noticed that the emotional hurts that I felt from my husband, caused my muscles to become stiff; my blood vessels were pinched hindering blood circulation in my body and my nerves were tangled causing lack of communication between my brain and different parts of my body. When Hannah prayed for me, the power of forgiveness passed through my body. Again my muscles became relaxed, the nerves became untangled and the blood started to flow in my blood vessels. The Holy Spirit gave me amazing peace!

My relationship with my husband got a little bit better, yet was not quite satisfactory. I was changed but it did not change him and again his actions started hurting me. My mother's favorite slogan was: "You cannot clap without two hands". We both needed to change in order to make our marriage work and it did not happen.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

During all these hardships, God was teaching me to forgive my husband. I had many complaints to God about him, from time to time. But for me, God had only one attitude and only one answer all the time: "Forgive..."! It was all easier said than done. Life was totally stressful, in the office, marriage, family, and finances.

Forgiveness & Denial to Forgiveness of Christ:

During the spring time, again, I became sick with allergies due to pollens and I had trouble breathing. I could not go to work. We had now some ethnic worship tapes at home and I listened to one of the tapes that contained songs of the crucifixion. As Good Friday was approaching, they were appropriate to listen to. As I listened, I cried through the description of the crucifixion. The songs described the people spitting on Jesus and whipping him as he stumbled, carrying the heavy cross and at the cross, he said:

Luke 23: 34

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

The words of these songs melted my heart. I said to myself: "My husband had not done anything to me, like what people had done to Jesus. What people had done to Jesus was unforgivable and yet he asked the Father to forgive them!" These songs gave me power to forgive him and as I forgave him, I felt healing power going through me. I felt relieved from the bondage that was cruelly hurting my soul, mind and body. It gave me new freedom that brought me joy. The freedom from the hurtful feelings helped my mind to think clearly. It was, as if, a new horizon was opening up. It was, as if, my vision was expanded and my strength was renewed and I was able to find some solutions to my problems. It was great. It was the power of forgiveness!

Matthew 6: 14, 15

14. For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Yes, God forgives many of our sins when we repent but he does not forgive us when we do not forgive others. In order to receive God's forgiveness, we must forgive others. When we forgive others, we allow God to work in us and the Holy Spirit can dwell in us with his fullness, which brings joy to our inner being.

The Lord's Prayer also gives us the message of forgiveness.

Matthew 6: 12

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Songs of crucifixion helped me, to forgive my husband and as I forgave him, things started to improve in our marriage and business.

Helpful Books: *My heartfelt thanks to the writers! Thanks to my church for inviting Joanne James.*

During those days, we attended a seminar in our Home Church given by Joanne James. We read her book, "Make Me Whole". This book had a tremendous impact on us. It definitely helped me to renew my mind. As per my husband's suggestions, I also read "Stay Alive 365 Days in a Year" written by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale and "Tough Minded Optimist" also written by Dr. Peale. These books helped me, renew my mind to cope with people who were difficult to deal with.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Forgiving my husband helped us in our business and marriage. But we were still far from where we wanted to be. Pastors Matthew, Naren and Jim, all gave us the scriptures about love.

1 Corinthians 13: 1 to 13

1. If I speak in tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

2. If I have a gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

4. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

5. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered. It keeps no records of wrongs.

6. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

7. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres.

8. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

9. For we know in part and we prophecy in part,

10. but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

11. When I was a child, I talked like a child; I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

12. Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

13. Now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

I appreciated all the Biblical marriage counselling based on scriptures from Pastor Matthew of our Home Church and many hours he spent for us going through the Bible. It also made me realize that he did work more than just on Sundays. But he was still getting paid well from the church as a full time minister whereas my husband did not get paid for his work. So, according to the Jain philosophy that was engraved in my mind, for many years, I could only think of his counselling as selfish motive to get free audit. However, I did not express myself to anybody what I thought.

Can't Clap without Two hands:

From my childhood, this was a favorite slogan from my mother, "you cannot clap without two hands". We both had to work together, in order to restore and strengthen our marriage.

One day, one of our missionary friends, Pastor Jim, was visiting us and God had told him about our problems, so when he came, he gave us some counseling. He explained to my husband that God has commanded him to love me. Then he gave the scripture in **Hosea 3:1** where God had commanded Hosea to love his wife just as God loves Israel. Then he explained if God can command prophet Hosea to love his wife, despite her unfaithfulness, he should love me even more because I was not unfaithful to him. Then he prayed for our reconciliation. That prayer made a difference in our relationship. There was a new spark in our marriage.

Previously I was the only one receiving a message to forgive from various counselors. It appeared to me that my husband did not receive his share of the advice. But this time, he listened to Pastor Jim. He needed to change too, as much as I. We cannot clap with one hand, only with two hands. Both partners have to work with each other in love and harmony in a marriage.

Thank you all my respectable pastors!

My special thanks to Pastor Matthew for his Biblical counselling and his time & effort!!

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

More to Forgive:

After some time, I again came back to the Lord to discuss my problems with him, not knowing that God would bring his agenda first. God told me, that I needed to forgive the churches. That was true. I felt that the churches were taking advantage of us and not paying my husband for his labor at all while the pastors, pastor's family members and other employees were well paid from the church.

Proverbs 3: 11, 12

11. My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke,

12. because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.

In my opinion, I was justified in having the resentment against the churches for their selfish attitudes as they seemed to be taking advantage of us to get my husband to do free audit as they knew that he could not speak up for himself and he can be pushed around. Although they were aware of our financial struggles, they didn't care.

The economic condition of the province had been terrible. We had seen this poor condition right from the day we had moved here. It had not improved yet.

We were getting a lot of work but our clients (businesses) had a hard time surviving except for some rich clients. Many of our clients did not have money to pay to the tax department and our fees. We had to rely upon their installment payments and collection reminders from time to time. Some big companies were going bankrupt. People were getting laid off everywhere.

Many people had chosen to be self-employed, because of excessive unemployment and they had hard times, in their businesses, too. We had all their financial records, so when we saw their financial struggles, we were compassionate and did not charge them as much as we deserved for our work. Instead, we only charged them fees that would not be a burden. Even then, they were not able to pay our fees, on time. My husband helped them prepare their statements, because he felt, compassionate towards them, who were harassed by the authorities, to submit their statements. Often, many of our clients' bank accounts were garnished for taxes, wiping off their bank accounts and leaving them in tears.

On the other hand, our Home Church was very rich and debt-free and having resources to pay decent salaries to pastors, pastors' family members and other employees, with decent benefits, pension plans and paid vacations. Yet they were demanding free audit work from my husband before we could do the work for our clients. The clients' work would pay for our fees. The church was aware that we were struggling with our newly opened accounting office, in this city, where the economic conditions were very poor. But they didn't care to strengthen the weak, by giving worthy of his labor.

Romans 15: 1 *The Bible talks about strengthening the weak.*

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

During those days, two of my brothers and their wives visited us and we did not have money to take them out to decent restaurants. So when we were out showing them our city, we took picnic lunches with us to eat in the park with the excuse that they were vegetarian and vegetarian food was not available everywhere.

It is true that my husband had the qualifications to earn a decent living but it did not help because of the poor economic condition of the province. Businesses and individuals were struggling to make ends meet. Despite such conditions in those days, there was absolutely no help from the government to self-employed people. There was no provision for welfare or unemployment insurance benefits. There was no business grant or loan from the government to self-employed people.

The Bible instructs us to give ten percent of our income to God's work.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Malachi 3: 10

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse; that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessings that you will not have room enough for it.”

I brought this matter to the Lord. The churches are not asking for 10% of our income, but they are asking for one hundred percent and it is not fair when everybody else in the church gets paid for their work, the pastors, janitors, secretaries and all the building maintenance people but nothing to the auditor to feed his family. Pastor’s own family members were hired in the church at decent wages. That did not seem fair. If they would pay my husband his audit fees, we, of course, would pay back more than a tenth of the fees plus a tenth of other income for a donation and we would be able to pay for our basic needs. My arguments were perfect and no judge could overthrow them, I thought. So why would God not bring sense to their minds?

It seemed like Jesus did not understand my pain. He could say only one word. All he could say: “Forgive”! Okay, He said two more words, “Forgive the churches”. No, Jesus said a few more words: “Go an extra mile”!

Matthew 5: 39 to 41

39. But I tell you do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic let him have your cloak as well.

41. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

Yes, that’s where my problem was. I was not able to comprehend the Lord’s teaching. I didn’t agree with the Lord. I wanted to please the Lord, but it was too difficult and painful to put it into practice! How can I turn the other cheek? How can I let someone take away everything? How can I bear the heavy burden a long way? I felt, the Lord does not understand my pain!

The Lord asked me to help my husband do the audit work for the church peacefully, without worrying about how I would pay my rent. Why should I help him do this free audit work for wealthy churches? Well, I don’t always understand why the Lord asks me to do something and sometimes, I do not agree with the Lord. However, I have reverence to obey the Lord, even when I disagree with him. Surely, God gave me the strength to obey his words.

Galatians 6: 9

And let us not be weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

I agreed, “Okay Lord, I will do as you say.” When I did help him do the audits for the churches without begrudging it, I was not doing it for the wealthy churches or for wealthy pastors but I was doing it for Jesus my Lord and my Savior! When the Holy Spirit asks me to do something, I just do it, even when I totally disagree with the Holy Spirit. He is my boss. I do it with reverence and love.

Colossians 3: 23, 24

23. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,

24. Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

I let my husband finish the church audits without begrudging it and continued with the work that I was responsible for doing. I learned not to get agitated with how and when the rent money would come but continued to work in peace that God would supply our needs at the right time, if only I obeyed him.

Psalm 46: 10

***“Be still, and know that I am God;*”**

Because my attitude towards the church audit work had changed, I had peace of mind. Slowly but surely, our cash-flow improved. We had our rent money on time. We did not have to displease our children by denying their reasonable demands. We were able to go on vacation every year and much more. Wow! God’s ways are so different! It indeed helped us to go an extra mile.

Isaiah 55: 8, 9

8. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord.

9. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Yes, I cannot comprehend God’s ways. In the following story from the book of Kings in the Bible, the prophet Elijah went to a poor widow and asked her to feed him first before she could feed herself and her son. In my opinion, this was cruel.

1 Kings 17: 7 to 16

7. Sometime later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land.

8. Then the word of the Lord came to him (Elijah):

9. “Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food.”

10. So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked: ‘Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?’

11. As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me please a piece of bread.”

12. “As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied:” I don’t have any bread- only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, so that we may eat it - and die.”

13. Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first bake a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. (With carnal mind, this sounds selfish & cruel to ask from a poor woman.)

14. For this is what the Lord God of Israel says: “The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord gives rain on the land.”

15. She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family.

16. For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

My natural thoughts would be: “How dare could Elijah ask a poor widow in the time of famine to feed him first? Wouldn’t that be too selfish and cruel?”

This was a matter of faith. The old poor widow trusted Elijah’s words and she baked the bread for him first and that’s how she was nourished till the famine was over. When we have faith in God,

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

our faith brings him honor and he releases his mighty power and supplies our needs in a manner that we do not understand. The Biblical definition for faith is:

Hebrew 11: 1

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Our situation was similar to the poor widow. Just as Elijah was asking a poor widow to feed him first, the church was asking my husband to do their audit first. However, the situation of our church was different from the prophet Elijah. The prophet Elijah was not rich.

The Lord told me to agree with whatever the church was asking us to do. As for me, the secret of obedience is to obey the Lord's command even if I disagree. This was the test of my faith. If I give out of my abundance, I do not require much faith. But if I could give out of whatever little I had, it required great faith on my part. The Lord was delighted when I showed my faith in him. Here is what the Bible says about our produce.

Proverbs 3: 9, 10

9. Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of your crops;

10. then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

Giving All to Jesus:

There are examples in the Bible where the Lord performed marvelous miracles when people gave everything of whatever little they had.

Luke 9: 12 to 17

12. Late in the afternoon the twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so that they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here."

13. He replied, "You give them something to eat." They answered, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish - unless we go and buy food for this entire crowd."

14. (About five thousand men were there.) But he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each."

15. The disciples did so, and everybody sat down.

16. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people.

17. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

In the above example, when the disciples gave the very little food they had to Jesus, he multiplied that food and fed about five thousand people. Jesus asked the disciples to give him everything and he showed his miraculous power of multiplication.

It takes great faith on our part to give to Jesus everything that we have. Such was our situation. When we were struggling to pay our bills, the Lord asked us to comply with the demands of the wealthy churches first before we did our billable work. I still could not understand how and why that would work, but I was willing to obey the Holy Spirit and let the Holy Spirit work it out for us.

There were times when I did not understand the command of the Lord but I simply obeyed trusting in him and in reverence to God that he would do the rest. If we do, and release our faith in him, then he can do marvelous things.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Obeying Jesus:

Here is another example where the sister of a dead man was reluctant to obey the Lord's instructions to roll the stone away from the grave for the fear of the bad odor from the dead body.

John 11: 38 to 44

38. Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.

39. "Take away the stone," he said.

"But Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

40. Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

41. So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me.

42. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

43. When he had said this Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

44. The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

I went through the same puzzling experience as Martha. Martha saw the resurrection power of God when the people obeyed the Lord and rolled the stone away from the grave. I also saw the power of God in how he supplied our needs when I obeyed the Lord despite my disagreement. I helped my husband with the church audit prior to our billable work because of my reverence for the Lord. Obeying God improved our cash flow in our business. *Thank you, Jesus!*

More to Forgive:

The next time, when I was in prayer, the Lord brought to me another agenda. The Lord wanted to talk to me about some of our close relatives in India. I was not thinking about them. The Lord was not happy that I had not written a letter to them for many years and the Lord knew why. We had excellent relationship at one time. Later on, at some time, I felt very hurt by their actions. So, I didn't write to them. Perhaps, they didn't mean it. I didn't forgive them. Then, the Lord also brought to my mind that I had not forgiven my other relatives in another Province. When I came to Canada for the first time, I had developed good relationship with them. But later, it deteriorated and I could not forgive them.

I had plans to visit India that year, so I asked the Lord to be patient with me. I promised that I would restore my relationship with our relatives in India, during my visit there. I was still not prepared to forgive the other relatives in another Province and I urged the Lord to give me some more time to be able to forgive them. The Lord was kind to give me some more time.

After a few months, I visited the relatives in India and took care of them while I was there. They were not well and they needed help and I looked after them and we departed with good relationship. The Lord was pleased with my actions.

Fruits of Obedience: 😊

Our business grew well. We didn't have to think about writing any checks for any necessity. A few accounts that had been written off as bad debts, came in and paid money that had been owed to us for a few years. This was without any demands for collection as we had given up all hope of collecting this money. Our clients were prospering and they started paying on time. Some paid us more than we billed them as they were very happy with our work. We enjoyed our financial freedom. I

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

started sponsoring a child from India, through World Vision. Then we sponsored a few more children from poor countries. We paid donations to many organizations that were doing good work and we continued to do so. The Lord had blessed us according to his words.

Luke 6: 38 ☺

Give and it will be given unto you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

This was the scripture that Pastor Roberts had taught us in his letters before we even had our Bibles.

Now, I was able to focus my prayers for many people instead of only for my family and business. Regularly, I prayed for our church pastors, TV evangelists, church leaders, neighbors, relatives, our friends and our children's friends, politicians, governments, our province and our country. God has commanded us to pray for all authorities.

1Timothy 2: 1, 2

1. I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made to everyone

2. for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

I would like to pray for my readers, our pastors and our governments and if you like, please join with me in the prayer.

Prayer:

Father God, we come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and Savior and by the authority of his precious blood.

Lord, I pray for all the readers and our loved ones that you will give us your grace and strength to forgive people so that we may be forgiven and blessed and we may prosper in every way. I also pray that you will give us a humble spirit to admit our wrong doings and receive forgiveness.

We pray for our pastors and church leaders that you will keep them in good health, give them your peace, prosper their families and give them guidance in the affairs of the church so that there will be unity, forgiveness, peace, love, joy, and harmony. We pray that you will bless them and give them amazing wisdom to preach your Word in a manner that is pleasing in your sight.

We pray for the non-profit organizations that you will give them wisdom to do their charitable work diligently and give them wisdom to run their finances.

We pray for our governments, ministers and all elected people, that you will give them good health and great wisdom to run our municipalities, provinces and our country in a manner that is pleasing in your sight, O God! Amen.

God Almighty gives us the power to forgive and a humble spirit to receive forgiveness!



POWER IN THE BLOOD & LIGHT OF THE WORLD

It was in our financial planning to go to India before my son's twelfth birthday to take advantage of half-price airline tickets for both my sons.

Idolatry:

Almost every home in India has some kind of idol that they worship. It is almost impossible to avoid going near idols. Even in the normal modes of transportation such as buses, taxis, hired vehicles or friends' cars, there are often idols. The following scriptures in the Bible explain about how much God hates idol worshipping.

Leviticus 19: 4

Do not turn to idols or make gods of cast metals for yourselves. I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 26: 1

Do not make idols or set up an image or a sacred stone for yourselves, and do not place a carved stone in your land to bow down before it. I am the Lord your God.

2 Kings 17:12

They worshipped idols, though the Lord had said, "you shall not do this."

Psalms 115: 4 to 8

- 4. But their idols are silver and gold, made by the hands of men.*
- 5. They have mouths but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see;*
- 6. they have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but they cannot smell;*
- 7. they have hands but cannot feel, feet, but they cannot walk; nor can they utter a sound with their throats.*
- 8. Those who make them will be like them and so will all who trust in them.*

Isaiah 46: 6 to 7

- 6. Some pour gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god and they bow down and worship it.*
- 7. They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and there it stands, from that spot it cannot move. Though one cries out to it, it does not answer; it cannot save him from his troubles.*

1 Corinthians 10: 14

Therefore, my dear friends flee from idolatry.

Health Concern:

I had a dilemma. The last time I went to India I was very sick because of being around idols in many homes I went to. I brought this matter before the Lord.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

The dear Lord told me to claim the blood of Jesus over my family. I practiced claiming blood of Jesus whenever I was around idols and that worked out very well. I did not get sick as I previously had been.

Leviticus 17: 11

For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

Ephesians 1: 7, 8

7. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

8. That he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

I was amazed by the power in the blood of Jesus. As I became more familiar with the Word of God, I came to realize that there is no power in idols. God hates idols so a person can lose favor with God by worshipping them, but idols themselves have no power to do any harm or healing.

1 Samuel 12: 21

Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you because they are useless.

Matthew 26: 28

This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

1 John 1: 7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his son, purifies us from every sin.

Light:

During this second visit to India, I was able to talk to many people about our Lord. A few people advised me to keep this matter a secret, so as not to offend Jains but I couldn't. The main purpose of my travel was to tell people about the Lord so that they may benefit from my Lord. I simply couldn't hide the Lord's goodness to me. Then, I also found in the scripture.

Matthew 5: 14, 15, 16

14. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

15. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

16. In the same way, let your light shine before men, so they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Coming into contact with Jesus, we become a light to the world and the very nature of light is such that it cannot be hidden.

Acknowledgement:

The Holy Spirit gives us that boldness and zeal to talk about the Lord. If Jesus was not ashamed of us and died on the cross for us, then why should we be ashamed of the Lord? Besides,

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

the Holy Spirit gave me so much peace and joy that there was no way I couldn't share my faith with them as I wanted them to experience the peace and joy that I was experiencing. Lord Jesus also said.

Matthew 10: 32, 33

32. Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

33. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

If you like, please join with me in prayer.

Prayer:

Father God, I come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and Savior and by the authority of his precious blood. I pray for my readers that they will understand the power in your blood and that they will walk in your light and acknowledge your Holy name.



God is light!

He enlightens our minds!

He renews a right spirit within us!

There is power in His blood!

There is power in the prayer!

Great things are accomplished through prayers!

CHAPTER 10

GRATITUDE

Listening to God:

My prayer life was changing. As I proceeded with my prayer, the Lord would bring his agenda. I learned to put my agendas aside. I learned to listen to God. It is a two way communication. It wouldn't be fair for me to ask God to provide for my needs without listening to him.

One day, the Lord reminded me about my cousin Madhavi. I wasn't thinking about her. Before my teenage years, I went for a vacation to stay with my grandmother, uncles, aunts and my cousin Madhavi, who was about 15 years older than me and another cousin who was the same age as me. I was excited to go stay in the big city of Mumbai because I had lived in a small city in the province of Gujarat. My cousin Madhavi was really very nice to me. She took me out very frequently and showed me the amazingly beautiful Mumbai. She treated me to many beautiful and delicious restaurants and fun places, and she also bought many gifts for me. I had a great time with her.

After I came back from the big city, I got busy with my life and never took the time to appreciate her for what she had done for me. I was lacking in my expression of gratitude towards her.

The Lord told me that it was not fair on my part to be unappreciative. He asked me to communicate with her and make a point of seeing her during my visits to India. We had not seen each other for many years and I had never written to her. When God told me, I realized that I had been unappreciative of her kindness towards me. Whenever I visited my country, I did not give priority to visiting her specifically. After the Lord opened my eyes, I wrote a letter to her and made a point of visiting her on my next trip to India to rekindle and strengthen our relationship with one another. Now, I see her every time I visit my country. God taught me the importance of being appreciative.

Psalm 100: 4, 5

4. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

5. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.

The western world and Christianity give a lot of importance to being thankful. It is a western custom to express thanks for every small matter. I was not brought up in a culture where we give thanks for everything. Often, we do feel very thankful but we don't always express it. Often, we take many things for granted. If you like, please join with me in the prayer.

Prayer: *Thank you Lord, for teaching us to appreciate!*

Father God, I thank you that you gave your only son Jesus to die for our sins. I thank you that you care for us and answer our prayers. I pray for all of us that you will give us thankful hearts so we may appreciate our family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers, employers, employees and everyone who deserves thanks. I pray that we may all come to know you more and thank you for everything you have provided for us. Father, I also pray that we will be appreciated by people in general as we appreciate them. Amen!

CHAPTER 11

UNGRATEFULNESS

It was spring time and I was suffering with allergies, colds and asthma. My suffering was so severe that I could not go to work. While at home, I asked the Lord why he was not healing me anymore as he had healed me in the past. The Lord was compassionate and reminded me of the scripture in the Bible.

John 5: 1 to 8

- 1. Sometime later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews.*
- 2. Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades.*
- 3. Here a great number of disabled people used to lie*
- 4. the blind, the lame, the paralyzed.*
- 5. One who was there had been an invalid for thirty eight years.*
- 6. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"*
- 7. "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."*
- 8. Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.*

The Lord then told me to get up and work around my home as if I was healed. So, I got up and went around doing my chores. I had lots of energy. I did the laundry, dish-washing, cleaning and cooking for the family. It was amazing. I was healed. My nose was not runny anymore and the asthma was gone. I could breathe. My eyes were not itchy anymore.

That night, my friend Dorothy from my Home Church called me to inquire about my health because my church was aware of my condition and was praying for me. *Thank you church, for your prayers!*

Alas! I made a terrible mistake in my Christian walk. Instead of praising God and giving glory to God for the healing that he had given me for the last several hours, I told Dorothy how miserable I had been for the last several days that I had been sick. I did not even give my testimony to her. ☹

When I put the phone down, the sickness came all over me again. I started sneezing, and had watery eyes and shortness of breath. ☹

It made me realize that the Lord had healed me during the day and I had not given thanks to God, I had not given glory to God. Instead of giving the testimony of my healing for the last few hours to Dorothy, I had complained about the sickness that I had during the past few days. I immediately prayed to God and asked for his forgiveness and the Lord restored my health. ☺ The following is an example of this from the Bible, where Israelites complained to God about their hardship instead of thanking God for his provision.

Numbers 11: 1, 2

- 1. Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then the fire from the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.*

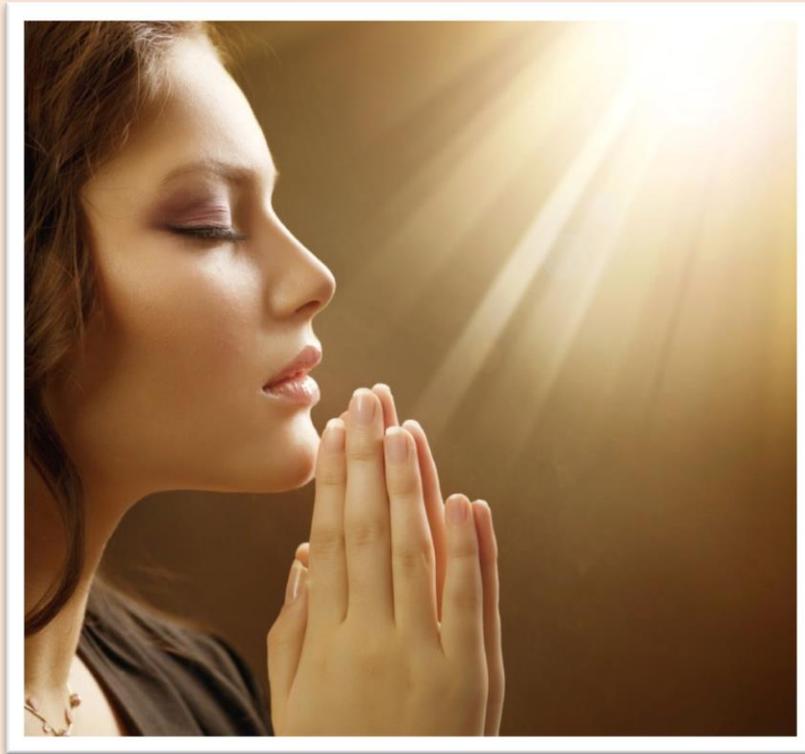
OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

2. When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the Lord and the fire died down.

I would like to pray for my readers; please join with me if you like.

Prayer:

Father God, we come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and Savior and by the authority of his precious blood. Lord Jesus, I pray for my readers and their loved ones that you will touch their bodies and heal them from inside out, from head to toe, in their mind, body and spirit. Lord Jesus, I pray that when you make them well, you will help them to experience and acknowledge your healing power and I pray that they will give glory to your name with thanks giving. Amen!



God is our teacher!

He leads us in the paths of righteousness!

Thank you Lord, for your guidance!

CHAPTER 12

SAMARITAN'S HELP

Sudden Sickness:

After a few years, as we were just getting on our feet in our accounting practice, my husband got sick. He had a fever for some time and the medications were not helping. He got sicker and sicker and got hospitalized. The doctor called me at work and gave me news that was hard to swallow. He informed me that my husband was very sick and was likely to die.

I cried and prayed as I drove home. I prepared my children for the bad news and drove to the hospital praying on my way.

My Husband's Condition: ☹️



(In the hospital, he looked as sick as this picture.) He recovered and lived an active life style.

When I reached the hospital, my husband was out of breath and looked like a skeleton. He looked like he was dying. With shortness of breath, huffing and puffing, he sat on the bed and told me with great excitement, "Jasmine, I am healed," which was hard to believe. Then he told me about the scripture that God had given him.

Psalm 118: 17, 18

17. I will not die but live, and I will proclaim what the Lord has done.

18. The Lord has chastened me severely, but he has not given me over to death.

My husband also said that God had told him that he was holding him in his right hand and that he was going to live. Despite the sickness, the joy of the Holy Spirit kept my husband very cheerful. He was assured that he was going to get well.

Isaiah 41: 10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

He convinced me that God had given him assurance that he was going to live. I went home rejoicing and praising God and praying for his speedy recovery.

Each day, I went to work in the office and each evening I came home, fed the children (ten and twelve years old), and leaving them at home, I went to the hospital. I came home late at night.

During this time, driving became a whole new experience. It became my permanent habit of worshipping, praising and praying to God while driving.

Romans 8: 28

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Audit Work:

When our Home Church and the Second Ethnic Church heard the news about my husband's sickness, they took their books and records away from his office to give the audit work to someone else.

Helpful People: *Thank you Lord, for all these caring people!*

My husband was in the hospital for about forty days, during which time Pastor Naren and Sushila from the Second Ethnic Church and many of our friends from both the churches visited my husband frequently, and prayed by his bedside for his speedy recovery. Some of our friends from the church came there every single day! It was a great comfort to have them around. They prayed for my husband and also for me and my sons. Some of our non-Christian friends also came to visit him. Thank you Jesus for loving Christians and loving friends!

Henry, the founder of our Home Church and his wife Mila came to the hospital almost every day and they humbly helped us. My husband didn't like the hospital pajamas so I brought some from home. He had to change his pajamas several times every day due to his sweat. I cannot thank Mila enough for her kindness and humble spirit that though she is rich, every day she took my husband's dirty clothes from the hospital, washed them in her washing machine and brought the clean ones back. I was unable to do so due to a lack of laundry facilities at my home. The times for the laundry rooms were very limited. I am very thankful for the sacrificial love of this Christian couple.

Donald, a member of the Home Church and our client came to see me in the office when my husband was still in the hospital. He apologized to me for not being able to see my husband in the hospital because of his working hours, though there was nothing to apologize for. He asked me if I had any financial needs and he was ready to help me. By this time, I had already arranged my finances and did not require any more assistance, however, it was comforting to my soul to know that someone had offered to help me if I had need. I am thankful for this caring Christian man.

Pastoral Care:

Then, I saw my husband's name mentioned under pastoral care in our church bulletin. Thank you Lord, for the pastoral care!

Pastor Mathew also made a quick visit to the hospital and prayed with him. My husband wished he should have spent a little bit more time with him during his sickness because of our friendship. This kind of sickness can make anybody very sensitive and sorrowful about such matter. The associate pastor also came to our home to visit him after his return from the hospital. He prayed with my husband for his speedy recovery. Thank you, Pastors! *God bless you.*

God's Provision: ☺ *Thanks to all the caring people!*

This sickness brought another financial hardship on us but God took care of those needs. Henry the founder of the church offered me a loan. I didn't know how I would pay back the loan,

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

considering a very slow recovery of his health our financial situation looked very gloomy. I thought, if the church would pay me for all his audit work, I wouldn't have to incur this unnecessary debt and worries of paying back the loan during this calamity! I had no choice but to borrow the funds.

The landlord in our office was like a kind Samaritan. When he heard about my husband's sickness he came and told me not to worry about the rent. He gave me grace to pay whenever I could. But I paid it from the loan. It was comforting to know that he was kind to wait for the rent.

As soon as I informed my brothers in India about his sickness, they figured that I might be in need of money and they immediately sent me enough money without me asking for it. My brothers insisted that I need not return the money. My brothers were neither Christians nor believers but they acted just like good Samaritans. As soon as I received the money from my brothers, I immediately returned the loan to Henry. What a relief of paying back the debt quickly! *Thank you, Jesus!*

My husband had purchased disability insurance just a few weeks before his sickness. I just remembered and claimed. It was settled shortly. He was not capable to work for over six months in that year. God provided for our financial needs during his sickness in his way. *Thank you, Jesus!*

Isaiah 55: 8, 9

8. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord.

9. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Blood Relationship:

In one of our Christian seminars, a preacher had explained that we (Christian people) have a blood relationship with each other, because we are related by the blood of Christ. It was a good concept to think that we Christian brothers and sisters have a blood relationship with one another which is better than our earthly father's blood relationship. The preacher made the point that the blood relationship among Church members through the blood of Jesus should be stronger than the blood relationship with our brothers and sisters through our earthly fathers. Despite this precious blood relationship, Jesus also gave us the following story.

Luke 10: 30 to 35

30. In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

31. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

32. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

33. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

34. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.

35. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to an innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

My brothers immediately sent me money even when I didn't ask them for financial help. My brothers kept calling me frequently to inquire about his health and that was very comforting to me although our relationship was through our earthly father and not in the blood of Christ. My brothers were neither Christians nor believers but they acted like good Samaritans.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Our God will provide for our needs. Sometimes, he brings across our path helpful Christian people or good Samaritans or an insurance agent. When I look back on my own life, I see numerous times when I have failed to act like a 'Good Samaritan'. God has revealed to me that I need to change my ways and act more like a Samaritan in that story.

My husband gradually got well as the Lord had promised him. Over six months of rest, he was back to work. We got back on our feet. He lived more than twenty five years in the best of health after he recovered from this sickness. He worked and enjoyed many physical activities. What's more important is that he proclaimed the works of the Lord to almost every person he met, specifically most of his clients. I would like to pray for my readers. If you like, please join with me in the prayer.

Prayer:

Father God, we come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and Savior and by the authority of his precious blood. Lord Jesus, I pray that you will be our provider, in the time of our needs: physical, social, spiritual, mental, financial, and emotional or whatever they may be. Even if you send a Samaritan on our path, you are our provider. We give you thanks and glory. We pray for all who act like good Samaritans that they may come to know you and those of us who know you will be as good as the Samaritan in that story. Father, we pray that you will teach us all to be like good Samaritans as well as good Christians. Let it all be for your glory.

A Message for my Family:

Thank you, loving family!

I love my family with whom I grew up. The comparison of my family with Good Samaritans is only for the purpose of explaining how God appreciates those who help people in need regardless of their culture and belief. I pray that God will continue to bless my family for their kind deeds and God will bless and prosper all who act like good Samaritans.



Dear God, mold me and make me a new creation in you!

Change my heart, O God! Renew a right spirit within me!

Let me be like you!

Help me to glorify your name through my life.

Forgive me God, when I failed to help my brothers and sisters

Give me a second chance

That I may remember to help those in need.

CHAPTER 13

NOW IS THE TIME TO FORGIVE

My husband slowly improved in his health and gradually started working in the office. Then Expo came to our city, which helped boost the province's economy. In the next year after the Expo, our accounting practice grew rapidly. Businesses were growing and their cash-flow increased. Many people came from other towns looking for jobs and starting new businesses here. We also had many tourists. All of this helped our practice to grow and gave us financial freedom.

Sickness in the Family:

After a few years, one of our close relative became sick. My husband went to India, leaving the business in my care. At home, I prayed for her wellness and that he would make it in time to see her. I was also concerned about her salvation; she needed to know Jesus. I had great faith. I even prayed that if she died, God would raise her from the dead so my husband could talk to her about the Lord and our people could see the power of God. There are examples in the Bible where Jesus raised people from the dead.

Luke 7: 12 to 15

12. As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out – the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her.

13. When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, “Don’t cry.”

14. Then he went up and touched the coffin and those carrying it stood still. He said, “Young man, I say to you, get up!”

15. The dead man sat up and began to talk and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

Unanswered Prayer:

I had great faith that God could answer my prayer for her. When I came home from the airport, my brother's wife Sarita phoned to inform me about her death and to tell me that the cremation would take place in a few hours. It is not customary in India to keep the dead body any longer for hygienic and financial reasons.

I cried a lot at first, because the Lord hadn't answered my prayer. I was hoping that people in our families would see the mighty power of God. But it hadn't happened. Now I understand that Jesus had a specific purpose in bringing back the dead man in the above scripture. The young man's revival was needed for him to take care of an old mother, a widow. But God hadn't seen any purpose in bringing this relative back to life. She was about ninety years old.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Now Is The Time to Forgive:

Sarita also instructed me to inform our relatives in another Province. I had not talked to them in more than a decade. I had not forgiven them. A few years earlier when the Lord had given me a list of people I needed to forgive, I had pleaded with the Lord that I needed more time to forgive these relatives. God gave me a prolonged period of time to deal with it.

Meanwhile, every time I went to India, I talked a lot about Jesus to my folks. If I kept proclaiming the name of Jesus to them, how could I then refuse to talk to our relatives? It would not bring glory to God. Suddenly, without warning, God had put the time limit on me. Now was the time for me to forgive them. See, what the Lord says:

Matthew 5: 23, 24

23. Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you,

24. Leave your gift there in front of the altar. First, go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

It was obvious that God would not accept my gifts unless I reconciled with my relatives. I then called her and talked to her for the first time in more than a decade telling her about the death of this relative. From that time onward, I started talking to her from time to time when necessary. Jesus has prioritized reconciling with one's family members over offering gifts to God.

Humility:

A few years later, they invited my sons to visit them. Now, Lord laid on my heart to apologize to her. This came as a shock to me. I had always thought she was the one who should apologize to me! I had thought whatever I had done was in reaction to her, but the Lord told me to do my part! I was so concerned about my relationship with the Lord that I knew that I had to please him. Whether I had acted or reacted, in Lord's sight, I was at fault and I needed to ask for her forgiveness. I couldn't displease my Lord! I sent a letter to her with my sons telling her that I was sorry for what I had done. In turn, she sent me a beautiful necklace with multi-colored precious stones. I experienced more joy by forgiving, forgetting the past, reconciling and having harmony with her than I ever did by holding grudges and keeping to myself.

However, my son was not happy when he visited her. He told me that she screamed at him. For several years, I didn't think it was a big issue. Now, I have realized the intensity of her screams and the seriousness of this matter. I pray that he will be able to forgive her. I urge my readers to pray for my son that he will be able to forgive her. Let it all be for the glory of God.

I would like to pray for my readers. If you like, please join with me in prayer.

Prayer: *Thank you Lord, for molding our lives and making us a new creation in you.*

Dear Lord Jesus, I pray for all our readers and our relatives and friends, that you will bring reconciliation in our relationships with each other. I pray for your spirit of forgiveness and humility to capture our hearts. I pray that we will all be able to see our own faults, recognize and humbly admit our faults, ask for forgiveness from one another and forgive one another. Above all, I pray that you will help us all to experience mutual respect, humility, harmony, peace, love and joy in our relationships with one another. Amen!

CHAPTER 14

NEW DIRECTION

God blessed us in our accounting practice with steady cash-flow through the power of prayer and forgiveness even in poor economy. I was very happy to work for my husband. Our office was just ten minutes driving distance from our home and the children's schools. We also prayed for our clients that God would prosper them. As we prayed for them, God made us prosper as well, just as when Job prayed for his friends, God made Job prosper.

Job 42: 10

After Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.

After a decade of severely hectic times, we had some quiet time in our accounting practice. Several of our big clients sold their businesses. A few of our clients retired. A few of them died and a few of them moved to other provinces. New clients usually come every year and it wouldn't take a lot of time for the office to get back into a hectic state. However, I needed a change and it sounded like the right time to move onto something new. Then, I inquired of the Lord if it was the right time for me to try something else. The Lord asked me to write my testimony in my spare time before I started looking for another job. I did so, and some of our guests and clients read my testimony. After a decade, they were destroyed in the fire of our home.

Unemployment:

When my husband returned from overseas, there wasn't enough work for the two of us to be occupied and he laid me off. I applied for my unemployment benefits as provided in the law. I did the job search from his office as it was easier for me to write letters to prospective employers using his computer, typewriter, photocopier, etc.

The insurance company declined my claim because I was looking for work from my husband's office. I hired lawyer Nazi to fight for my claim.

Job Search:

First, I wanted to work for the collection agency again where I had worked before. I thought, perhaps the Lord would fulfill his promise about that employment if they hire me again, but it didn't work that way. They gave me some tests where I didn't live up to their expectation in the vocabulary component. My vocabulary was found insufficient for their needs.

I applied for many other positions and I went for a few more interviews. One of them was in downtown in an amazingly magnificent and beautiful office. The work was not challenging and the pay was not great either, but the decoration of the office was magnificent to work there. But the Lord said that it was not for me.

I went to another interview far in the south. The pay was excellent. The work was not challenging and it required me to start too early in the morning, which I didn't like very much. I brought this matter before the Lord and the Lord said that particular job was not for me.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

I went to another interview, way in the east south. The pay was good but I didn't like the type of business they were operating. I brought this matter before the Lord and complained about this company because of the type of work they were doing. The Lord said it wasn't for me.

Then, two ladies Mary and Anne interviewed me at Conflict Reconciliation Company for an auxiliary position. I wanted a new challenge and was ready to take the position. The Lord said that it was the position for me! I thanked the Lord for giving me the assurance that I would get that job.

Next morning, the interviewer Mary called me. I got excited. She told me that I was not selected for the position. I was disappointed. Was I really hearing what God was telling me?

Hebrews 11: 1

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Meanwhile, I got busy with other personal matters. A couple of weeks later, everything was resolved. Then, Anne from the Conflict Reconciliation Company informed me that they were hiring two more people and if I was still available, I could start Monday. ☺ Wow! God is faithful. His timing is perfect. We need to trust in him and wait patiently.

Psalm 46: 10

Be still and know that I am God;.....

Numbers 23: 19

God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

If you like, please join with me in prayer.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I pray for my readers that they will desire and be able to hear your voice. I also pray that they will not abandon their faith when you take some time to fulfill your promises because you know when the time is right. I also pray for those who need employment that they will come before you in prayer and you will provide them with suitable employment in the right time. Amen!

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. John 10: 27



CHAPTER 15

LEGAL BATTLES

Despite the inconvenience of driving in horrendous traffic in the early morning hours, I enjoyed this new challenge, working with the Conflict Reconciliation Company.

It took me three months to find this job after my husband laid me off. So, I made a claim for my unemployment benefits for the three months. The insurance company refused to pay me anything for the three months of my unemployment as I was looking for work from my husband's office, using his computer, typewriter, photocopier, etc. Lawyer Nazi overcharged me and lost my case at two stages. So, I argued about his bill in my letter to him. Then, he dumped me, refusing to represent me before the umpire.

I went before the umpire without a lawyer. I prepared my case and prayed. I had already learned my lesson about being humble, when I had lost in the adjudication in my previous case, with the collection agency. I believe that the reason God allowed me to suffer the injustice at that time was because of my pride.

James 4: 10

Humble yourself before the lord and he will lift you up.

I continuously reminded myself to be humble and claimed that the battle was the Lord's. As I was preparing my case to present in front of the Umpire, I wrote my favorite hymn beside my presentation notes. The hymn reminded me to be humble before the Lord.

I trusted God for his righteousness. I trusted that he would bring the right judgment in this legal battle if I remained humble.

Psalm 11: 7

For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice; upright men will see his face.

Psalm 50: 6

And the heavens proclaim his righteousness, for God himself is judge.

The Holy Spirit helped me to prepare my case and gave me confidence to present myself before the Umpire. The insurance company had a lawyer. The Lord Jesus was my advocate, the righteous one. I totally trusted in the Lord to win this battle.

I knew that only the Lord could give me the victory just as King David asked the Lord before going into battle, "Will you give me the victory?"

2 Samuel 5: 19

So David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?"

1 Chronicles 14: 10

So David inquired of God: "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?"

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

The Lord answered him, “Go, I will hand them over to you.”

If King David, with all his mighty forces, knew that only God could give him the victory, who am I to depend on my preparations? No matter how much I prepared and how confident I was in my case, I knew that the battle belonged to the Lord and only the Lord could give me the victory. I went in front of the umpire, with confidence in my Lord. Then the lawyer from the insurance company approached me to shake my hand and congratulate me because I had won the case. I asked her, “How?” She said, “We withdraw and you won!” 😊

The Lord intercedes for us.



Hebrews 7: 25

Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Wow! What a victory! All my time spent in the preparation of arguments was in vain! I had labored to prepare the case for nothing! However, I had also labored in prayer and God had answered my prayers! I continuously reminded myself to be humble before the Lord and the Lord lifted me up to win! I did not have to present any arguments! Praise God! Jesus is my advocate and he interceded for me and prepared the heart of the opposing lawyer to withdraw!

This was the first victory, the Lord had given me in a legal battle because I was humble and I trusted God and God knew that I was righteous in my claim. I give him the glory for my victory.

Then insurance company paid me my full benefits.

Now, I had another battle to fight with my lawyer. He had charged me excessively and lost my case at two stages. Then, he dumped me when I argued about his fees. I went to the registrar's office in the Supreme Court for a review of the lawyer's bill.

Again, I prayed and asked God to be my advocate and teach me how to review the lawyer's bill. I actually wanted the whole fee to be nil because he had dumped me and refused to represent me in front of the Umpire. I had found a precedent where the lawyer had refused to represent his client and the lawyer's bill was reduced to nothing.

The dear Lord helped me prepare all my arguments. On all my notes, I wrote messages to remind myself to be humble and to remind myself that the battle was the Lord's.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

The lawyer, whose bill I had applied for a review had another senior lawyer to support him. I was all by myself, but I had the guidance of Holy Spirit. The Lord, whom they could not see, was with me.

I went ahead pouring out all the arguments in front of the Master. The Master was pleased with my arguments but did not agree that the bill should be reduced to nil. He asked us to negotiate between us and if that didn't work, he assured me that he was going to reduce the fees.

We negotiated and the lawyer had to return a portion of the fees. 😊 This was my second victory in a legal battle. Although the victory was not as much as I had fought for, I believed that the Master in the Registrar's office gave a verdict that was righteous and that's all I wanted, the justice and the righteousness.

The Lord Jesus is my advocate. He filled me with the Holy Spirit. Under his guidance, I pleaded the case and won the victory.

If any of you face a legal battle, and if you would like to, please join with me in this prayer.

Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I pray for our readers, specifically those who face legal battles, that we may all put our trust in you and that you will be our advocate. I pray that you will guide us as to how to proceed with our case and help us to receive justice. Prepare the lawyers' hearts to be reasonable in charging their fees and to do their job well. Amen!

Jesus is our advocate.



Our God is a righteous judge.

CHAPTER 16

MOVING FORWARD FROM AUXILIARY

The employer gave us training for the first few weeks to all of us who were offered an auxiliary position. I tried to be cooperative with as many people as possible. I overlooked many things and kept quiet about many issues because it was a temporary position.

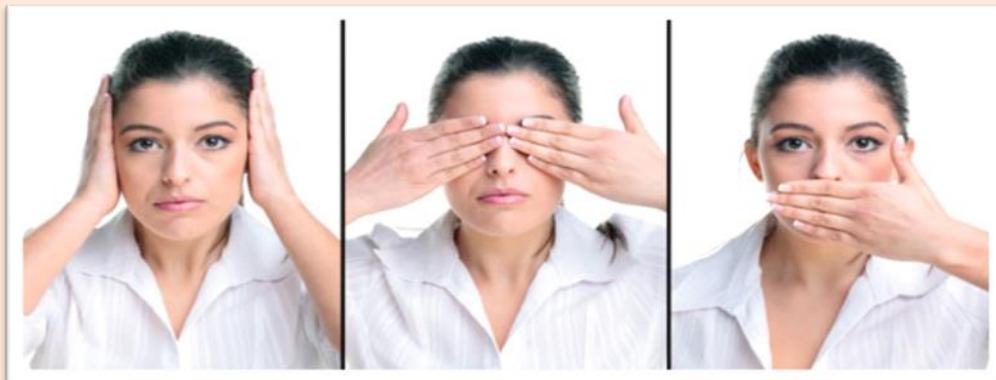
Proverbs 13: 3

He who guards his lips guards his soul, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.

This employer gave us two coffee breaks. Most of the time, I spent my first coffee break in the companionship of the Holy Spirit and the Lord. I was very blessed that God had provided me with a beautiful place in the back of our office building where I had a lovely quiet time with the Holy Spirit.

Because this position was temporary, I continued to apply for other jobs. My trainer Mary gave me a very good reference letter.

The auxiliary position kept extending for a few weeks and a few months at a time. Gradually a year went by and my job became permanent, with all the employee benefits. ☺ Surely it was the result of being quiet, and having a submissive spirit. Please join with me in prayer.



Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I pray for my readers that they will gain wisdom in dealing with people and superiors in their work places and help them to sustain their positions and prosper.



CHAPTER 17

THE POWER OF WORSHIP

Health Problem:

Sometime after I became a regular employee, my knee started to hurt, I started to limp and my whole leg became swollen and painful. My family doctor came to my home. He told me it was possible that I had bad cartilage which might have to be removed through surgery. X-Ray results came. The doctor told me that I would have to go through a couple of surgeries. The first one would be a diagnostic surgery to figure out if there was bad cartilage. The second one would be to remove it. I was concerned about surgeries as often they could cause other problems.

I informed my family in India. My brother's wife Sarita called me back to advise me not to rush into surgery. She said that it could be healed by a simple injection as was the experience of another of my family members.

Thank you, Bhabhi, you saved me from surgery!

I called my surgeon to discuss with him for options other than a surgery. He said firmly that the result of my X-Rays indicated that I needed the surgery. I wasn't able to walk then. So, I couldn't go from one surgeon to another to get a second opinion. I was informed that I would not be able to walk for a long time after the surgery. This was scary. Once again, I was depressed not knowing what to do. The pain was excruciating and I couldn't concentrate on reading or praying. Fortunately, our Home Church had given us a very nice worship cassette. Almost every word on this cassette tape was uplifting. So, I played the worship tape both sides all day long, every day before the surgery and again on the day of the surgery. *Thank you, church, for the beautiful gift of worship tape!*

My desire was to eliminate surgery and have some simple remedy. I was taking anti-inflammation drugs at home, but it was not curing the problem. Then, on the day of the surgery, my son drove me to the hospital in the morning. He waited with me outside in the reception hall until he had to go to do some chores. Around half past one, they found a bed for me and they took me into a big room where there were about four beds.

Thank you hospital for your caring staff members!



OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

A patient next to me asked me what I was in for. I explained. She told me that she had had the same surgery several weeks ago and it didn't work for her. She explained that while they were doing the diagnostic operation, some crunchy bones fell out and she was in a cast for six weeks. Now she was admitted to the hospital again. She told me that the doctors were going to operate on her around the ankle area, to remove some bones and apply them to the knee area and that she would be in a cast for another six weeks after the operation. Her story scared me a lot. I had nobody to talk to. I was really scared. I continued to worship the Lord and that was my way of communicating with the Lord and he comforted me.

My surgery was postponed from ten in the morning to two in the afternoon. Then, around two o'clock, a doctor came to tell me that my surgeon Dr. Fox had some emergency operations to do. So he would be late and I would be taken into the operating theatre around five p.m. I trusted God and thought that God was preventing the surgeon from operating on me. However, I didn't know what would be next and I continued to worship the Lord. With fasting and lying down in bed all day, I was getting drowsy and I was scared because I wanted to talk to the surgeon before he operated on me. I was afraid that I would fall asleep and the surgeon might operate on me while I was sleeping. So I fervently prayed to God to keep me awake while I continued to worship. God answered my prayer and I stayed awake.

After 5:30 p.m., I was taken to the operating theatre. All the equipment for the surgery was ready. Then, Dr. Piyush came to me and told me that Dr. Fox, who was supposed to operate on me, was very tired and could not come. Dr. Fox had sent Dr. Piyush instead. He asked me if it was alright for him to take care of my surgery. I thought: "This was the Lord's doing." The Lord had changed the surgeon for me. I agreed that it was okay with me.

Then, I urged him to look at options other than surgery. I also informed him that one of my family members had been healed by mere injections. *I must thank my Bhabhi that because she informed me about other options, I persevered and asked the surgeon to look at other options.* Dr. Piyush looked at my knee where the pain was and he looked at my X-Rays. **Then, he told me that I didn't need the surgery!** He gave me two injections. The first one was a pain killer and the second one was a steroid. Then, immediately, he asked me to straighten my leg and I did. 😊 **I walked out of the hospital without surgery! 😊 No pain! No cast! No wheelchair! No crutches! No overnight stay in the hospital! The entire ordeal was over in a day! Just on my two feet, I walked out! 😊 Thank you surgeon! You are a good physician!** I knew about the side effects of steroids, but there were plenty of repercussions of surgery, too. It has now been more than fifteen years and I have never had any surgery on my knees. I have been able to walk and so far I have not experienced any side effects of one steroid injection. Hallelujah! This was the power of worship!!! *Thank you church, for your gift of wonderful and inspiring worship tape! 😊*

Romans 12: 1

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – which is your spiritual worship.

Hebrews 12: 28, 29

28. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,

29. for our God is a consuming fire.

Revelation 4: 10, 11

10. The twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

11. *“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”*

When I returned to work, I told my colleagues how God had prevented me from having surgery, and healed me completely with a couple of injections, and I was able to walk out of the hospital through the power of worship. Please join with me in the following prayer if you like.

Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus and God our Father, we thank you for all you have done for us and we worship you and adore you because we love you. We thank you for your healing power and mercy. You are worthy of our praise and worship. I pray for all my readers that as we all worship you, you will heal us from the inside out, from head to toe, in our mind, body and spirit. I also pray that if anyone desires to prevent an operation, you will help the person to find simple solutions to heal his/her body. Amen!

There is power in worship.



God can make a surgeon act like a physician!

*Thank you Jesus! We love you. We adore you!
We praise your holy name!
You are worthy of our praise.
We worship you!*

CHAPTER 18

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

Unthinkable news came that hit me in the chest like a hurricane. The youngest of all my brothers, Suresh, had died suddenly. ☹️ A man who was full of enthusiasm and vitality, who had a lot to live for, who had lots of dreams, plans and projects on hand, who had a lovely wife and beautiful children, suddenly dropped dead. There is no exaggeration in what I am saying. He was carrying out a big project and working with my other brothers and some friends. He was in a meeting, talking with people and suddenly, he dropped dead. I was working in my office when this hurricane of news hit my ears and chest. Everything went blank in front of my eyes. All of a sudden, several people were gathered around me near my desk trying to figure out what was happening to me and why I behaved as if a bomb had exploded on me. They called Leena, our manager, then. They wouldn't let me drive so two of my colleagues drove me home. The same day, Leena sent me beautiful flowers. I appreciated her. My sorrow was too deep to be comforted.

Thank you Manager, for the lovely flowers!



*Love you brother!
Nothing can replace
you, brother!
You will always be
remembered.
We miss you!
See you in heaven!*

*Lord, thank you
for taking care of my
brother's salvation.*

I was confused and heart-broken. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know how to pray. I was disappointed with God. I kept uttering, "God loves me and he took away my brother!" When our close relative had died in India, I had prayed to God to make her alive, but did he answer my prayer? No! He didn't. I was discouraged about praying. Besides, the cremation would be over within a few hours. I did not know what to do. The sky had fallen on me. I was crushed. Again and again, I uttered: "God loves me and he takes away my brother! God loves my brother and he takes him away from his family!" Then, I probably repented for accusing my Lord and being so sarcastic. I don't remember for sure. Maybe, I didn't. I was too confused to pray. I didn't even know what to pray for. Our church that we had been going to, had taught us that we cannot pray for a person after he dies. Then, I remembered the power of worship. I played my worship tape day and night, every day as I prepared to fly, during my flight, during my stay in Mumbai and on my way back home. I worshipped the Lord. I knew there was great power in worship. *Thank you Church, for the wonderful gift of a worship tape! ☺️*

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

However, I disagreed with my church in the understanding of the scriptures below:

1 Peter 3:18, 19, 20

18. For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,
19. through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison
20. who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built.

My understanding of the above scriptures is that Jesus ministered to the spirits of the dead (those who died in the time of Noah) after his death, but my church did not agree with me. I knew the great power of worship and I continued to worship. I knew if I worshiped the Lord, he would take control of the situation and would do something good.

Many weeks after my brother's death, I was in my favorite place where I used to go to have fellowship with the Holy Spirit during my coffee break at work. I had some concerns about other matters. The Lord was trying to talk to me about my brother. I would not listen to what the Lord was trying to talk to me about. I continued with my other concerns.

The next day again, I was there during my coffee break. The Lord again tried to talk to me about my brother. I listened. The Lord told me not to worry about my brother's salvation. This was a very peaceful encounter with my Lord. *Thank you Lord, for the assurance you gave me about his salvation!*

As I meditated on the scriptures more, I encourage people to pray for the dead, just as Jesus did when John the Baptist died.

Matthew 14: 12, 13

12. John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.
13. When Jesus heard what had happened (John the Baptist was beheaded), he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place.

My understanding of the above scripture is that Jesus went to a solitary place to pray for John the Baptist who was beheaded. However, he was interrupted by a crowd and he compassionately healed their sick and fed them.

Matthew 14: 22, 23

22. Immediately (after he fed over five thousand people) Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.
23. After he had dismissed them, he went up into the hills by himself to pray.

My understanding of the scripture is that after he healed the sick and fed the crowd, he went alone to pray for John the Baptist.

If you like, please join with me in the prayer.

Prayer:

Father God, I come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and Savior and by the authority of his blood. I pray for my readers, specifically those who have lost their loved ones that you will comfort them as they worship you with all their hearts. You will give them wisdom about what to pray and you will heal their sorrows.

CHAPTER 19

AUTHORITY'S ORDER NOT TO PRAY

During the second or third year of my job, a desperate client who was being harassed by her building manager, called me for help. The law did not have a remedy for this kind of situation. At that time, the option to do intervention or mediation was not given to us. I felt sorry for this woman. The only way I could help her was to tell her that Jesus could help her. If she was willing, I could pray for her and she agreed. I prayed with that woman over the phone quoting her the following scripture.

Matthew 5: 43, 44,

43. You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Then, I prayed with her for the building manager who was harassing her.

A few minutes later, the same woman called me again and informed me that her manager knocked at her door asking for her apology. ☺ Oh! What a power there is in prayer! I was happy to hear the answer to my prayer!

One of my colleagues overheard me and informed our office manager Leena. She called me into her office and gave me a warning not to pray for people ever again. ☹ Oh! What a waste of my job! The company's motto was to help people in need but they just didn't have the avenue to help in certain situations as it was outside of their jurisdiction. Helping this woman through the power of prayer should bring a greater reputation to our company. But our manager and the company didn't want anything to do with prayer. Here, I had the perfect opportunity to help people resolve their problems by praying but our organization did not believe in prayer and wouldn't allow me to pray.

If the organization could not help people, it was their problem and my employer didn't care whether they were helped or not. History repeats itself as I see a similar situation in the Bible.

Acts 3: 1 to 10

1. One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer-at three in the afternoon.

2. Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts.

3. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.

4. Peter looked straight at him, as did John, Then Peter said, "Look at us!"

5. So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

6. Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

7. Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong.

8. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping and praising God.

9. When all the people saw him walking and praising God,

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

10. they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Acts 4: 1

The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people.

Order Not to Pray in the Name of Jesus:

Acts 4: 18

Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

I was not allowed to pray with people while I was working. Some peoples' circumstances were terrible. Our organization could not help because of lack of jurisdiction. I took those desperate people's phone numbers, called them from my home and prayed with them.

I recall one client who was harassed by an individual and our office would take a long time to resolve the issue. I prayed for him, and the individual who was harassing his family moved out of their neighborhood! ☺ What a power there is in prayer! Praise God! Our God has the jurisdiction over all matters! Our God also works fast when there is need.

There were other examples where my clients were helped through simple prayers. However, there were also times when I felt the need to pray for people, and I brought their phone numbers home, but could not phone them because I was busy with my family and my personal life. I apologize to my Lord that I could not pray for many people who would have been helped.

However, it is my feeling that my company should have utilized this last resort of prayer when they were unable to help people within the limits of their jurisdiction and powers. It is my desire that businesses, big corporations and governmental authorities will give importance to prayer to resolve many business and government situations and peoples' problems. If you like, please join with me in the prayer.



*This is my dream that Government
and people will pray in my
country!
Our God has unlimited
jurisdiction!*

Prayer:

Father God, I come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and Savior and by the authority of his precious blood. I pray for my readers and specifically those who are in businesses and governmental authorities that they will find wisdom to take the shelter of prayer when the situations are beyond their control and when they have no jurisdiction to remedy the problem. Amen!

CHAPTER 20

THE BATTLEFIELD

In this company, many of our directors, supervisors and managers were transferred frequently from one department to another. Often, initially, they were unaware of many procedures and did not have basic knowledge about our work, until they became acquainted with the system. Often, before they could get acquainted with our system, they moved to another department and the position was again filled by someone new who did not know much about our operation. Lucy was our new supervisor who had just recently moved to our department from another department where the operation was entirely different from ours. She was not yet aware of our act and many of our procedures.

Educating the Public:

One of my favorite duties was giving seminars to groups of people and educating them about the operation of our branch and how we could assist them with their problems. My presentations were greatly appreciated by many audiences because of my patient nature and willingness to answer all their questions.

My first seminar was tremendously successful. The organization, where I gave my first seminar circulated feedback reports to all who attended. The host showed me the excellent remarks made by the audience on these reports. I gave these feedback reports to my supervisor not realizing that they may create a problem.

Thank you, lovely audience!



Jealousy:

I gave several seminars to various organizations. The host companies sent me letters of thanks and appreciation, with praiseworthy comments, to my office. I was not aware of them because the receptionist gave all these letters to my manager. Neither the receptionist nor the manager showed them to me, even though the letters were addressed to me. Cathy was my manager then. One day, I was talking to her secretary Dina. She had my file open at her desk. Accidentally, I saw those letters. I asked her to give me copies. She hurriedly made copies for me before Cathy walked in. It sounded suspicious to me that they never brought these to my attention.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Instead of receiving a pat on my back for the praiseworthy reports, I became a target of hate. Instead of getting promotions, it became a battlefield of constantly trying to defend accusations, criticisms, and threats. It was a rough and a rugged road to walk each day facing all kinds of harassment. Here are a couple of examples from the Bible showing how jealousy can drive people to do wrong.

Acts 5: 17, 18

17. Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy.

18. They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.

Acts 13: 45

When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying.

Consequences of Jealousy: ☹

Later, my supervisor found a way to stop me from doing these seminars! One of my seminars was pre-scheduled a couple of months in advance. Then, an unexpected winter storm happened just a week before my seminar. It snowed every day during that week. In my city, it is unusual to have this type of heavy snow. Snow was piled up on both the sides of the streets because we do not have a good snow shovel service. A few days in advance, I asked my supervisor to let me postpone my seminar to another date due to bad weather conditions. However, she declined. On the day of the seminar the weather conditions were worse than before. I made a request to her again to let me leave early enough to reach to the place, or to provide me with taxi fare, or to postpone the seminar to another date. She informed me that she had inquired about the traffic. According to the information that she claimed to have received, all the roads were clear and the traffic was moving. I could see from the windows that the traffic was just crawling and that it was piled up. I could not reach to the place in time. My audience had left.

Dealing with Harassment ☹

After Lucy received the praiseworthy reports of my speaking engagements, she kept calling me into her office, finding fault with my work and giving various warnings to me. Fortunately, these meetings were conducted in the presence of my shop stewards. I made notes of all she said and how I responded to her and what conclusions we came to. I forwarded all my notes to her and asked her to let me know if she had found any discrepancies. I also gave copies to my shop stewards. Supervisor Lucy refrained from giving any response to my notes. She continued to rebuke me all the time. To me, it felt like a form of harassment. Sometimes, I enjoyed preparing minutes of her meetings with me. Often, it was stressful and time consuming.

Disciplinary Action: ☹

Then, Lucy gave me two disciplinary letters, one for the speaking engagement which I had missed due to poor driving conditions, and another for day-to-day work. With encouragement from my two shop stewards, Nancy and Sharon, I filed a grievance against her. *Thanks, shop stewards!*

Bribing my Shop Stewards: ☹

We also had another manager, Laila, who had given me a temporary supervisory position for a small group, which was supposed to start in a few weeks.

When Laila was away, my supervisor Lucy took me to our second manager Cathy. She asked Cathy to rescind my temporary assignment. She asked Cathy to offer it to my shop steward Sharon

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

and she accepted it. It was hurtful to see that Sharon, being my own shop steward, did not decline the position that was offered to me first. In my opinion, it was the right thing for her to do because she was the shop steward representing my grievance against Lucy. Now, Sharon was also a Sunday school teacher in a very well-known church. She also used to sing in their church choir. It was even more hurtful to see that someone Christian would accept a position which was a conflict of interest, stealing it from her own colleague whom she represented. Sharon also knew that I was a Christian. She had neither any regard that she would do such thing to a sister in Christ, nor that she was my own shop steward representing my grievance.

Lucy also offered a promotion to my second shop steward Nancy arousing a conflict of interest. **It is my prayer today that shop stewards should not be supervisors and supervisors should not be shop stewards to avoid any conflict of interest.**

My grievance was heard by Stacy from the personnel department. She had to ask Lucy to withdraw all the accusations in the disciplinary letters because they were fundamentally wrong. Then, she redrafted (instead of withdrawing) the disciplinary letters nitpicking some issues. They still held me accountable for not arriving on time for my speaking engagement. I was sad that they denied me from taking any more speaking engagement duties for the rest of my career with them. They did not consider the stormy weather and the non-cooperation of the supervisor which made me late for my appointment.

Yeast of the Pharisees:

My colleagues were becoming unfriendly towards me due to Lucy's influence. There had been a practice of passing a collection plate for everybody's birthday and giving a gift to the birthday person. Now, they stopped the contributions for my birthday. I overheard Romeo talking to other people saying that it was not fair. Then, I saw that he went around to everyone and later he gave me a belated birthday card with cash gift inside. He cared for me. Thanks Romeo for standing by my side. Jesus talks about how sin can spread among people just as how a small amount of yeast can make the dough rise.

Matthew 16: 6

“Be careful,” Jesus said to them. “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

Matthew 16: 12

Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Lucy's treatment of me had spread through almost all of my colleagues like yeast and they all started harassing me. She may have been responsible for it.

Moving to another Office:

After the grievance was concluded, Cathy moved me to work in another branch office in the south. Before moving there, during my prayer time God warned me through the scriptures that I was heading towards more trouble and I would be facing many challenges, and going through a rough road ahead.

Warnings from the Bible

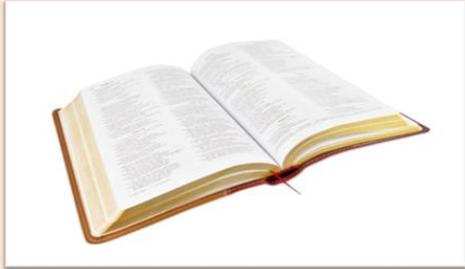
Luke 21: 17, 18

17. All men will hate you because of me. ☹

18. But not a hair of your head will perish. 😊

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

I tried my best to be nice to people to win their hearts by sending them friendly emails. Who in the world would like to work in an office full of hate? 'A hair of my head will not perish' – was a comforting verse for me. God also gave me the scripture below in Daniel 6:26, time after time.



Daniel 6:26

I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel.

Our God be praised in BC.

Our God be praised in Canada.

Perhaps, God is saying that people in my province will worship my God. I am still waiting for God to reveal to me his interpretation of Daniel 6: 26. Maybe, there is yet time for God to fulfill this scripture.

Farewell to the Main Branch:



Before leaving the main office, I sent a friendly email to all my colleagues saying goodbye to them. Some people responded; some brought me flowers; some took me out for lunch. It was a general practice to have a potluck when somebody is leaving, but I was the black sheep. I was thankful to my manager that she did not decline my request to give me some free time to meet each and every person in the office to say goodbye to them. I am more thankful to the Holy Spirit who gave me courage, wisdom and a cheerful countenance to talk with everyone even though a few of my colleagues had turned sour towards me due to the influence of our supervisor.

Moving on to the Branch Office in the South:

My new supervisor Diane informed me that she was aware of what had happened to me in the main office. I gave her copies of all my grievance files so she could know my side of the story. Everything went smoothly with everybody in the beginning. I presumed she read my files and understood my position and probably she agreed with me. In the beginning, Diane often asked me to go for a walk with her during break time. My colleagues saw that the supervisor was going out with me. Then, they also asked me to go for a walk with them from time to time.

Coping with the harassment from the New Supervisor: ☹

Supervisors from all the different branches met to discuss various issues from time to time. When Diane returned from their meetings, she tried to find fault with me. When she didn't ask me to go for a walk for a few days after returning from their meeting, I wanted to find out what her response would be. So, I asked if she would like to go for a walk with me and she declined. Also, the rest of my colleagues stopped going for a walk with me. Actually, that did not bother me, as I would rather be with the Holy Spirit than with anybody else. Then, Diane kept calling me into her office. She started

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

nit-picking about things that weren't of much importance to our job. She falsely accused me and gave warnings. Later, she also raised her voice, and often she looked like a witch to me when she got cross. I felt sorry for her because she looked stressed out from harassing me. She was angry, but my countenance was peaceful because the Holy Spirit gave me peace. I continued with the same practice. Each and every time she called me into her office, I sent her an email summarizing the discussion between us. She rebuked me for sending her too many emails. Then, I started writing letters to her in my personal time, describing what was discussed between us, what her concerns were, what my reply was, and what our final decision had been. I asked her to correct me if there was any discrepancy. She didn't comment and certainly did not like to receive letters from me. The harassment kept increasing. It was painful and stressful. The Lord gave me peace and strength.

My Comforters and my Teachers: ☺

I was fortunate to have teachers. I was also hurting at times. Soon, the Holy Spirit of God (my teacher) gave me peace and wisdom and showed me how to deal with the problems. Then, I was able to overcome my hurts. I had learned a lot about how to keep peace in a difficult situation by reading the book written by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale (my teacher): 'Stay Alive 365 Days in a Year'. In his words, "Peace of mind generates power." *Thank you, Dr. Peale!*

Puppet:

In my understanding, Diane was just a puppet. She didn't really want to harass me but she was ordered to harass me. However, she was not able to harass me to the fullest because I was documenting in writing what was said every time she had a talk with me in her office. She showed great displeasure when I handed in the essence of the discussion of her meeting with me.

Nothing to Lose:

The supervisors and managers could find time to harass me because my pay checks did not come from their pockets. Therefore, they could find all the time in the world to harass any employees for any of their selfish motives. They had nothing to lose by wasting everybody's paid time at work.

Whereas in the private sector, where the employer is concerned about profit and loss, the superiors are less likely to harass employees because it would be a waste of the salaries paid to employees and to the superiors. Who would like to waste money? Nobody who owns the business would like to waste money! Probably, somebody who is not an owner may not care!

Spreading of the yeast:

By this time, all my colleagues had become very sour to me, constantly harassing me. I suspected that the order to harass me was coming from the higher authorities. It was spreading against me just like yeast spreads in a batch of dough as explained in Matthew 16: 6 & 12.

Matthew 16: 6

"Be careful," Jesus said to them. "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Matthew 16: 12

Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Praying for Enemies:

As the scripture says, I prayed for each and every colleague and all the managerial staff every single day but it did not seem to change their hearts and behavior, not in my situation. However,

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

praying for my colleagues and the managerial staff helped me to have peace of mind, strength and energy.

Luke 6: 27, 28

**26. But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,
28. Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.**

It felt like Discrimination:

Also, in this office, employees kept track of everybody's birthday and circulated a plate for collection. They had purposely missed my birthday.

Sometime later, my eldest brother passed away. He had been sick over a month and I knew about his sickness but I could not go to visit him as I was too occupied with grievances and the stress in my office. However, I prayed for him every single day for his peace and salvation when he was sick. There were no condolences from my colleagues, when he died. When I returned to work after the bereavement leave, our receptionist Denny's father passed away and immediately, a collection plate was circulated and flowers were sent to her right away. *However, God has comforted me for my brother's salvation! That is more important to me than a bouquet of flowers!*

A Polluted Office:

The entire office staff had become very rude towards me. They were not co-operating in many work related issues and probably they were directed to do so. Often, they were bossing me around and they were insolent towards me. However, with peace of mind, I only responded to them when it was work related and when a response was necessary. I did not give in to their bossiness. Often, I did not respond to their foolish expressions and I let their words just bounce off the wall. Supervisor Diane kept herself locked in her office to ignore the misbehavior of my colleagues.

Once, I accidentally sneezed and Josie shouted at me, "Don't spread all your germs here!" (Normally, people say, "Bless you!") I ignored her comments and continued with my work. I thanked my father who had taught me from the childhood, to ignore such foolish remarks from barking dogs.

Barking Dogs and Pigs: *Thank you Daddy, for your loving instructions! I miss you. See you in heaven!*

One more thing that helped me to get through this job was my father's teaching. My father had taught me from childhood: "If a dog barks at you, you should not bark back, because you are not a dog and you don't want to act like a dog and you don't want to adopt a dog's character. Just ignore the dog-like behavior."
Do not adopt a dog's character!

Hey Doggy,

I am not going to bark at you. I don't belong in your family. I have better and more important things to do.



OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Whenever, people say bad things and if I don't have an obligation to respond to them, I ignore them as foolishly barking dogs. I was brought up in a place where we had many stray dogs; they barked all the time and we ignored them all the time. My father's teaching helped me not to be affected by many foolish remarks of my colleagues and people, in general. In addition, the Holy Spirit had given me armor around my spirit so that these kinds of foolish remarks from these impudent people could not penetrate me, but bounced back to them. The Lord Jesus also said:

Matthew 7: 6 *Thank you Holy Spirit, for your protecting armor! Barking of dogs could not hurt me!*

Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to the pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

With this advice, there was no point in responding to these pigs. They would only trample my precious words (pearls) under their feet!

One day, I found a sign in my cubicle, "Repent, sinner!" It was rude and hurtful. I thank the Lord that because of my sin, he came into this world and he defends me in front of my Father in heaven against Satan's accusations.

Mark 2: 17

On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Hallelujah! Jesus came for me, the sinner, just as doctors are for the sick people!

John 2: 1 *Thank you Jesus, you came into this world, for the sinners like me!*

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

I am so thankful to know that Jesus Christ is my advocate and that he speaks on my behalf.

Once I was on my lunch break and the receptionist Denny came into the lunch room shouting and asking me what I was doing having lunch while a person was waiting for me in reception. If a client wanted to see me specifically, he would just have to wait till I finish my lunch! Denny was very cruel to me, expecting me to interrupt my lunch to get back to work. These are just a few examples of how I was treated in that office. The numbers of incidents of harassment were countless. Then, I understood why Jesus said:

John 15: 20

Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

I was being persecuted and it was becoming worse day by day. People hated Jesus, so they hated me, too. People mocked Jesus, sneered at him, so they did that to me, also. Surely, no servant is greater than his master! However, Jesus has forewarned me and comforted me.

Matthew 5: 10, 11, 12

10. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

12. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

All the staff members in my office were my enemies. The yeast had spread through the entire office. The only friends I had were God the father, the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit whom they could not see. Here is what Jesus says about our enemies.

Matthew 5: 43 to 48

43. You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbors and hate your enemies.

44. But I tell you: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45. That you may be sons of your father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

46. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

47. and if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?

48. Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

While working in the South branch office, I prayed for each of my colleagues and managerial staff every day. I couldn't love them as they did not need my love. I could only pray for them. Here is a true story that I heard on the 100 Huntley Street television show produced by Crossroads Christian Communication Inc. I am writing this story from the best of my memory. This story has encouraged me to pray for my enemies.

True Story on a Television Show: *Thanks, 100 Huntley Street! You gave me strength!*

A few Americans were hijacked in Lebanon and they were being tortured and beaten up. The hijackers were singing a slogan, "One American must die!" One of the Americans was a Christian and he started praying for these hijackers. He asked God to heal the hijackers' sorrows and pain, the root cause of their behavior. He continued to pray for their peace and the healing of their wounds – physical, mental, psychological, emotional or whatever. Ultimately, the hijacker who was beating up this American took him to his home, gave him medical assistance, and offered him a bath, food and a bed to rest in. They became friends.

This testimony had a great impact on my spiritual life. Therefore, I could pray for my colleagues who ill-treated me. Even though I didn't see the results of my prayers in the same way as in the story above, God has rewarded me for obeying his words.

Luke 6: 22, 23

22. Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you, and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of man.

23. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their Fathers treated the prophets.

Luke 6: 27, 28

27. But I tell you who hear me. Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.

28. Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Coping with the Polluted Office:

In the morning, I prayed at home. I prayed, before entering my office. My colleagues were just waiting for me: thinking about how they could insult me, find fault with me and harass me. It reminded me of Daniel entering the den of lions. I also had the same feeling each day when I entered my office that I was facing a den of foolish, impudent and insolent people trying like lions to tear me to pieces, mentally, emotionally, and psychologically.



Daniel 6: 16

So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lion's den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually rescue you."

Because of his faith in God, the lions did not kill Daniel and they were quieted. Now let us see what happened to Daniel in the scripture.

Daniel 6: 19 to 23

19. At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den.

20. When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

21. Daniel answered, "O king, live forever!

22. My God sent his angel and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king."

23. The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

In my situation, my supervisor and colleagues were not quiet. They were harassing me thinking that their harassment might make me quit my job. But it did not happen because they were roaring in vain. Their harassment could not penetrate me because I was protected by the armor of God. Their negative and insulting comments bounced back to them without hurting me. Amazingly, a good number of my colleagues, supervisors and managerial staff left their jobs but I did not. 😊

Another way to describe this office was that it was like a burning oven where all my colleagues acted like hot tempered burning charcoal. As soon as I went into the office, it was like I was walking on and being surrounded by, burning charcoal. Just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who were able to go into a fiery furnace without getting burnt, I was able to work in that office in an atmosphere that nobody with only human strength could survive. I wouldn't have survived without the Holy Spirit of God. Here is a small piece of scripture about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Daniel 3: 17 to 27

17. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

18. *But if he does not, we want you to know, O king that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”*

19. *Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual*

20. *and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace.*

21. *So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace.*

22. *The king’s command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the men who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,*

23. *and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace.*

24. *Then king Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, “Wasn’t it three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?”*

They replied, “Certainly, O king.”

25. *He said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.”*

26. *Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!” So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire,*

27. *and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.*

My situation at work was similar to the above story. I was working in an office full of blazing fire of abuse, insults, non-cooperation, rebuke and disrespect, but God gave me the armor to protect my spirit, emotions and mind. I was able to give good service to the public with peace of mind, do my job well and at the end of the day, I was able to worship the Lord and experience the joy of the Lord.

In Isaiah 9:6 Jesus is called the Prince of Peace. Here are some scriptures that describe how God gives peace to his believers.

Psalm 29: 11

The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace.

Psalm 85: 8

I will listen to what God the Lord will say; he promises peace to his people, his saints- but let them not return to folly.

Psalm 119: 165

Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.

John 14: 27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 16:33

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

Romans 15: 13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Philippians 4: 6 to 7

6. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

7. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

James 1: 2, 3, 4

2. Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds.

3. Because you know testing of your faith develops perseverance.

4. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete not lacking anything.

The Holy Spirit gave me peace and courage to continue to work in that office. I was not willing to quit my job because I knew that God had a purpose in keeping me in that job and God had promised me that not a hair of my head would perish. The rude behavior of my colleagues did not stop me from expressing my point of view in staff meetings, and in my correspondence with them. It did not affect me from giving good service to the public. The Holy Spirit had given me peace, courage, wisdom and joy. Although they were rude, I refrained from having their influence on me. I did not act like barking dogs. I maintained my personality, being firm but not rude, just ignoring their foolish acts.

Every morning while going to work I prayed and worshipped the Lord all the way. While returning from work, I turned on the worship music and rejoiced in the Lord. Truly, I was so engrossed in the joy of worship that I could not think about my colleagues and what had happened to me in my office. Every day was a bad day in the office. Some days were worse than others, but my colleagues' foolish remarks could not penetrate my soul because the armor of God was protecting me. Every evening, when I worshipped the Lord with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, it turned into a joyful evening. Again at home, I played worship songs that gave me joy. I can truly say that the joy of the Lord is my strength. There is great power in worship. Previously, I had experienced the power of worship in healing of my body. Now, I was experiencing the power of worship in healing me spiritually, emotionally, psychologically and mentally. Here are some scriptures that explain the power of worship that brings healing and joy to the soul.

Exodus 15: 2

The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. He is my God and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Psalms 18: 32

It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.

Psalms 28: 6, 7

6. Praise be to the Lord, for he has heard my cry for mercy.

7. The Lord is my strength and shield; my heart trusts in him and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song.

Romans 12: 12

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.

Romans 15: 13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Galatians 5: 22, 23

*22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23. gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

Ephesians 6: 10 to 18

10. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

11. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

12. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

13. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

14. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,

15. And with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

16. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

17. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18. And pray in Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Philippians 4: 4

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice!

1 Thessalonians 5: 16, 17, 18

16 Be joyful always,

17 pray continuously;

18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Certainly, I had matured in my Christian faith and that helped to sustain me in the worst circumstances and to overcome the attacks of the enemy. Reading the Bible had matured my faith in the Lord and I was protected by the full armor of God.

Lotus:

Since childhood, my father had taught me to become like a lotus. Although a lotus grows in filthy mud, yet it comes out a beautiful flower. By the same token, we often come across filthy mud around us in this world. We should learn not get the filth on us but draw on the nutrients and become like beautiful lotus despite our surroundings.

My office was like filthy mud but I learned to ignore the dirt and the filth and gave my best service to the general public whom I served. The general public that I met expressed their appreciation of my service. The general public, whom we served, looked forward to talk to me more than to my colleagues as they specifically asked the receptionist that they wanted to talk to me. Surely, my father had taught me to bloom like a lotus even in the filthy mud. Oh! I am so thankful to my father who taught me such beautiful philosophy to live a victorious life.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

*Thank you father, for your loving instructions! You will always be in my heart! See you in heaven!
Beautiful lotus in dirty water*



Grievances Again:

Finally, my supervisor Diane gave me a terrible Work Performance Review. This made me very depressed and I cried a lot. In a short time, I regained my strength. I prepared a grievance against my supervisor because of her inappropriate report. My union shop steward Janice was my colleague. Almost all my colleagues were harassing me. Janice wasn't my friend either. It was unfortunate for me that I had to ask Janice to take my grievance and to defend me. I had written down all the points of grievance. All Janice had to do was to pass my grievance file to the manager and she did.

Another Grievance:

During the summer months, we were invited to attend the wedding of the daughter of our relatives in another Province. I did not have seniority in the office and my request for holidays was denied. I filed a grievance. This grievance was concluded in time for the wedding and I was able to take only a few days off from work to travel to attend the wedding with my family.

Another Crucial Test of Forgiveness: *A family matter.*

In the past, I had not been able to forgive these relatives of ours and the Lord had brought to my attention that it was not right for me, not to forgive them. After a long emotional battle, God brought some circumstances into my life and I was able to communicate with her family after a long period of silence. Now that I had reestablished a relationship with them, I decided to accompany my family to the wedding of their daughter. Since this was a matter of obeying the Lord through forgiveness and rekindle a relationship, I inquired of the Lord as to what kind of marriage gift we should give her daughter. The Lord put on my heart that we should give her my necklace, the one with a diamond pendent in pure gold, with pure pearls lines, which was given to me by my father-in-law for my wedding. This was a very expensive gift for me to give. I talked to my husband about what the Lord had laid on my heart and he agreed.

We all went to her wedding but they had made arrangements for us to stay in a friend's home as they did not have enough space in their own home. The bride was too busy with all the ceremony and arrangements and surrounded by too many people. We never got a chance to get close to her to talk to her. They did not even ask us to participate in the wedding ceremony, like close relatives do in a normal Hindu wedding. It actually was good for us that we did not have to participate in the wedding ceremony. We would have had to say no because it could involve bowing down to other gods. As we were unable to meet or talk to the bride, I gave that beautiful necklace personally into the hands of her mother to give it to her.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

During the reception, we were entertained by a variety of amusements and delicious foods but we were not given a chance to meet with the bride and the bridegroom. The bride and bridegroom went around each and every dinner table to meet with the guests, except our table. They went away without talking to us, seeing us or shaking hands with us. We had absolutely no contact with them, not a single word or a handshake.

That night my husband was very depressed and regretted that we gave a very beautiful and expensive necklace to her. I also felt sad about not meeting the couple. However, I did not regret giving the necklace to her because I had done it in absolute obedience to the Lord. Besides, some time ago, the Lord had brought this scripture to my attention.

Haggai 2: 8

'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the Lord Almighty.

Therefore, I believed that all the jewelry belonged to the Lord and nothing was mine. It was a big test of faith for both of us. It was, as if, the Lord was saying to me, "Now what? Do you still forgive her?" By this time, the Lord had given me enough lessons about forgiveness. I had matured enough in my Christian faith and God had given me the strength to forgive. However, my husband cried a lot and he was more depressed than me. I was depressed too, seeing him depressed. It was an emotional and financial disaster. We had spent an enormous amount of money buying airline tickets with heavy summer prices and suits for our sons. It felt like we returned home empty handed because we did not get to meet the bride and the bridegroom at all and we did not travel around because my approved holidays were too short. We felt stupid to have spent this kind of money for nothing.

Despite all this, we forgave her because what could we say to the Lord? We knew the Lord Jesus has one attitude and he does not change. He forgave all mankind despite the pain of crucifixion; our pain was nothing compared to his!

Then, I returned to the office.

Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: *Back to the office*

Then, one day, our director Lee talked to me in private. She asked me with compassion, how I was able to cope with the harassment from my colleagues. I failed to recognize that she was trying to get some secrets out of me. Sometime later, another of my colleague also approached me the same way with a compassionate tone.

Mathew 7: 15

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.



My Mistake: *Because I didn't meditate on God's words.*

I responded to them that my satisfaction came from the appreciation of the general public about my service to them. I further explained that the childish behavior of my colleagues could not hurt me because I was mentally and psychologically stronger than them. *(I was too honest!)* ☹

I gave them an example: "If a two years old child comes to you and starts pushing you, how much can you be pushed? What strength does the child has to push you? Probably not enough to be

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

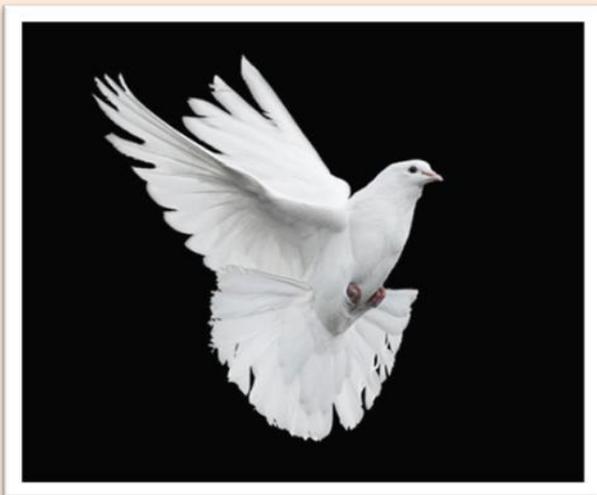
able to move you! You can easily ignore a child. With the same token, I can easily ignore the childish behavior of my colleagues!" My answer was not incorrect. But I did not recognize their deceitful trick. They were like ferocious wolves in sheep's clothing because their motives were to find the secret of my strength and to plan an attack.

My answer was right, to a degree. But there was more to it than just the general public's appreciation. It was the Holy Spirit of God that had given me courage and strength to stay in my job. I failed to give glory to God and failed to remember Lord's advice! (*What a shame!*) ☹

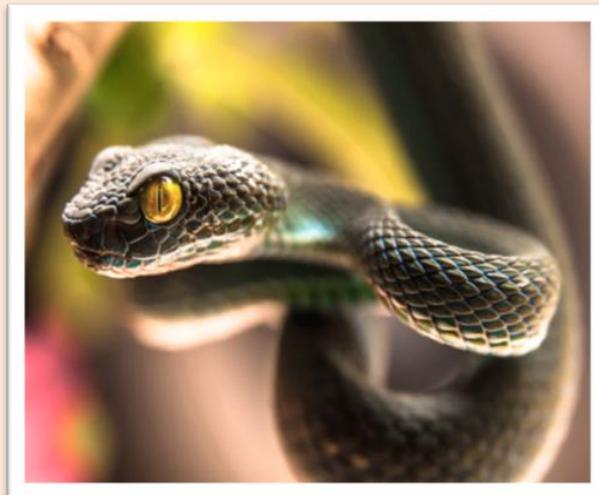
Matthew 10: 16, 17

16. I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

17. But be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues.



As innocent as a dove!



As shrewd as a snake!

Consequences of Not Being Shrewd:

Then, just a few days later, two ladies walked into the reception area. Generally, we serve people on a first come first served basis. But, the receptionist Denny asked me to take these ladies for some reason and I did not argue with her. These two ladies, Samantha and her mother, were sitting across from me, on the other side of the table and I was showing them with my pen where to write what on the application. The mother screamed and shouted that she needed to call the police and accused me of hitting her daughter with my pen. Although, I was shocked with such behavior from a client, I kept my peace of mind. We had a telephone in the reception area for the public to use. I asked her to go outside and use the phone, if she wanted to do so. I then, called another person into the interview booth and carried on with my duties. The next person, with whom I was talking, told me that she had seen everything and that I had not done anything wrong. The ladies who had accused me, then, went to Denny who then called the supervisor, who gave me a talk. She didn't like the fact that I had called another client into the booth right after these ladies complained.

These ladies were my first bad experience with the general public during my seven years of working with that company. By this time, I had worked in the south branch office for four years. I have reason to believe that these people were lured by the managerial staff and that they posed as clients in order to give me a rough time. These incidents happened just after I told my director that the appreciation of the general public had given me strength to work in the office.

I was not as shrewd as a snake.

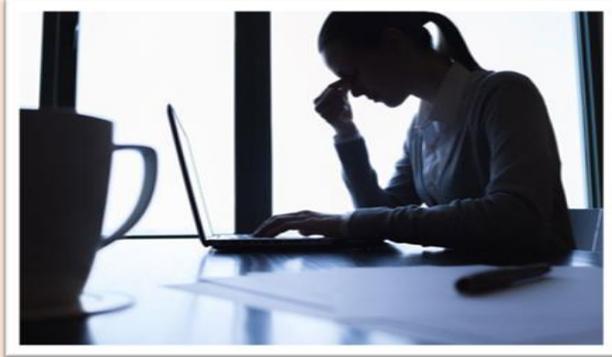
OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Stressed out Supervisor:

My understanding is that Diane just could not take this stress. She was stressed out from harassing me as I kept responding to her verbal threats in writing. Now, I had filed a grievance against her about the performance review report. She was stressed out from playing puppet of the manager and the director.

Supervisor Diane left her supervisory position without informing us. I never saw her or heard about her or found her anywhere in our company. She did not even come to any grievance meetings. There was no email about her. There was no farewell party for her. My understanding was that she quit her job abruptly.

My sympathy – she seemed to be caught in this game of dirty politics



Revelation 3:20

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him, and he with me.

*Dear Supervisor,
Jesus loves you! He is knocking at your door.*

We had other supervisors who demoted themselves and quit their supervisory positions because it was too stressful for them as they were not meant to use their brains but they were meant to be babysitters and puppets of higher authorities. Now, I think I was better off not getting a supervisory position. Now, I think that my work was more important and interesting than a supervisor's or a manager's job, not being a puppet.

Handling the Grievance:

My grievance file was in a binder with an index and tabs, including all the evidence, just the way I had done it in the past. During our trio meeting (with shop steward Janice, manager Ash and myself but not my supervisor), the manager did not open my grievance file but put it aside and gave her pre-determined decision on the spot that the grievance was denied. It seemed obvious that the manager Ash was also acting like a puppet. She was just following the orders from the higher authorities and not using her own brain. It appeared that the entire office was governed under the old army dictum, "You are not paid to think, you are paid to do what you are asked to do." I took this grievance to the next step.

Previous Supervisor Back:

Now, after Diane left, my previous supervisor Lucy came into the office where I was. A few days later, Lucy asked me to log in the telephone queue at a specific time and stood in the next cubicle to listen to me. Right then, I came across a ferocious client who was difficult to deal with. Then Lucy asked me: "What is the problem?" I did not respond to her in detail. But later on, this same client wrote a letter of complaint against me to my supervisor and Lucy told me about that complaint. She also told me that it happened when she asked me to log in the telephone line. I am also suspicious about this complainer who addressed my supervisor by her first name in her letter.

Misuse of Supervisory Authority:

There were work related emails going around. One of my colleagues Len, who also kept his Bible on his desk, wrote some rude and disrespectful things towards me with a copy to all my

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

colleagues and to my supervisor. In his discourteous email, the part that made me totally indignant was: "Your response that it is already on the board only serves to exacerbate the disenchantment some of us have for you."

This made me indignant and I responded to him: "Children of God neither respect the devil nor expect any respect from the devil."

Then, Lucy asked me to see her and she made derogatory remarks about me in her report. In her various inappropriate and discourteous remarks she added fuel to the fire by saying humiliating things against me: "Then she looked at me, and began with a tirade of childish nature, stating how everything had been Len's fault, and it was other's fault."

I filed a grievance of 'misuse of supervisory authority' against her through the same shop steward Janice who was my colleague. I had filled out the grievance material myself and all she had to do was to pass it over to the manager. She did it; whether she agreed with me or disagreed with me, I didn't care.

Union shop Stewards:

Union shop stewards are also employees of the same employer and in order to sustain their jobs, often they feel they have to please their supervisors and managers. So quite often, they walk in a very crooked way, keeping one leg on the side of the colleague and the other on the side of the employer. However, at the second stage of the grievance I found another shop steward Alice who was from a different office and she was very helpful. *Thank you, Alice, for your sincere work!*

Consequences of a Poisoned Office: *Many thanks to my union.*

The union representative Gordon from the head office came to attend the grievance meeting. Gordon first met with only my supervisor Lucy, my manager Ash and my shop steward Alice. I was not happy that Gordon did not allow me in the meeting, although I was paying the union dues and not my manager. In my opinion, he should have excluded the manager instead of me. Alice then gave me the explanation from Gordon. He said to my manager that if this grievance went to the arbitration stage and if the arbitrator determined that the whole office was poisoned, the arbitrator had the power to fire the entire office staff (including managers and directors) and hire brand new employees. I wished I had heard this directly from Gordon. This was very scary for the manager and the superiors and therefore, this time, the manager decided to deal with my grievance. Lucy told me with discontent that I was suing her, which had never occurred to me.

Manager Ash worked sincerely to deal with this grievance because she did not want this grievance to go to arbitration, to protect her own job security. This order was also from the directors as they wanted to protect their own positions, too. I know this because I heard her communicating with the director concerning this grievance. *(Thank you Alice, you did a wonderful job!)*

Serving the general public was just fine except for these odd ladies described above; two ladies face to face and the other lady over the phone. These ladies were my first two bad experiences with the general public during my eight years of working with that company. By this time, I had worked in the south branch office for four years. I have reason to believe that these people were lured by the managerial staff and that they posed as clients in order to give me a rough time. These incidents happened just after I told my director that the appreciation of the general public had given me strength to work in the office. *(Oh Director, You are pretty smart to spread the vicious net for me!)*

The atmosphere was becoming worse in the office day by day not because of the general public but because of the mistreatment from my colleagues. God had forewarned me earlier:

Luke 21: 17, 18

17. All men will hate you because of me. ☹

18. But not a hair of your head will perish. 😊

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

The scripture was being fulfilled. I took comfort in the second part of the scripture believing that they would not be able to do anything to me, no matter how hard they tried. Every single day, I read the Bible.

Daniel 6: 10

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened towards Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

I followed Daniel's example and every morning before going to work, I knelt and prayed. I prayed during one of my coffee breaks. When I came home from work, I knelt and prayed before dinner. Before going to bed, I knelt and prayed because I was fighting a great battle at work. I recited **Psalm 91: 1 to 16** twice a day and that gave me strength to go to the battlefield of my office each day because I believed every word of the Psalm.

Psalm 91: 1 to 16

- 1. He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.*
- 2. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress. My God in whom I trust."*
- 3. Surely, he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence.*
- 4. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart*
- 5. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day,*
- 6. nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, Nor the plagues that destroys at midday.*
- 7. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.*
- 8. You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked.*
- 9. If you make the Most High as your dwelling Even the Lord who is my refuge*
- 10. then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent.*
- 11. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;*
- 12. they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*
- 13. You will tread upon the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent.*
- 14. "Because he loves me" Says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.*
- 15. He will call upon me, and I will answer him;*

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

*I will be with him in trouble.
I will deliver him and honor him.
16. With long life will I satisfy him
and show him my salvation.”*

The Fear, the Waves & the Winds, My Refuge: *(forget the office!) ☺*

Lately, I had joined a sailing club with my husband. It was our new hobby and we became crazy about it. We sailed several times a week and enjoyed the nice breeze of the ocean.

Since we were learners, occasionally I was scared when the big waves approached us or when the boat tilted or tipped over. After sailing, I realized, how nice it was for me to forget about the polluted office and the colleagues and the managerial staff. The fear of the winds and waves took my mind off my office completely. It was a feeling like my mind, heart and soul had gone on a vacation. It was an emotional and psychological vacation every single day I went sailing with my husband. My mind was renewed and it gave me new strength to face the battlefield of my office, the next day and the day after. Mostly, it was the fear of capsizing and constantly paying attention to the winds, waves and sails that helped me to forget about my office and in addition, the pure oxygen on the waters gave nourishment to my brain. Our presence in the boat also kept us close to our Lord. Every time, I saw big huge waves I remembered the scripture and did what Jesus did. We rebuked the wind and waves in the name of Jesus and they were calm. It worked.

Matthew 8: 23 to 26

23. Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.



24. Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping.

25. The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We are going to drown!”

26. He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the waves, and it was completely calm.

God helped us to calm the waves and we sailed safely forgetting my office. Oh! What a break from the thoughts of psychological torture of the office!

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

God's Prescription for Sleep

The following scriptures helped me get good sleep which enabled me to face the battle the next day.

Psalm 23: 1 to 6

- 1. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing.*
- 2. He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me besides quiet waters,*
- 3. He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteous
For his name's sake.*
- 4. Even though I walk
Through the valley of shadow of death
I will fear no evil,
For you are with me.
Your rod and your staff
They comfort me.*
- 5. You prepare a table before me
In the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup overflows.*
- 6. Surely goodness and love will follow me
All the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

I was able to have sound sleep trusting in my Lord most of the nights.

God's Gift of Sleep to his beloved 😊

Psalm 4: 8

I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm: 127: 2

In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat- for he grants sleep to those he loves.

Proverbs 3: 24

When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

Uncooperative Manager:

During last couple of weeks before Christmas of Y2K year, the general public kept calling us to inquire if we were open and up to what time, on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. I sent email to Manager Ash if there was any intention of closing the office earlier on those days but she didn't answer me; she kept me in the dark and as a result I told people that we were open till the end of the day, as usual. We had no rights to close the office earlier if the manager did not approve.

Peak of Harassment: ☹

On the evening of Y2K, both supervisor and manager were away. Just after the Christmas, all my colleagues had been harassing me more than ever before and it reached to a peak. They did not co-operate with me in work related issues which affected our service to people.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Josie's job was to prepare the documents for our clients. A couple brought their papers at 1:30 in the afternoon and they were going to pick them up by 3:30 pm. Two faced Josie was polite with the general public but refused to me to prepare their documents telling me that they were closing the office at 3 pm. She wanted me to tell them to come after the long weekend but I didn't because there was no approval from the manager to close early. She wanted to make me look bad in front of the clients for giving them runaround. She kept commenting that she had to babysit me all the time.

When I returned from my scheduled break, my colleagues said that I was not supposed to take my break because they were closing the office at 3 pm. They told me they were tired of babysitting me. I informed my colleagues that manager had not approved that we could close the office earlier.

I told Josie that some clients were picking up their documents before 4:30. Again they complained about having to babysit me because they wanted to close the office earlier.

My colleagues locked the office entrance door earlier than 4 pm. So, nobody could come in to receive our service. I went to my cubicle.

Then Josie ordered me, "You are not leaving earlier! You stay till 4:30. You will be the last person to close the office."

I said, "No problem. I am paid till 4:30 and I will stay."

I went to the washroom. When I returned, Josie was in my cubicle. She ordered me again, "Now, turn off your computer! Do you know how to put the security code? We have to babysit you all the time!" By this time, my colleagues and especially Josie had told me countless time that they were babysitting me.

Upset, Indignant and Humorous:

I was upset because we were giving rotten service to people by:

- 1) Giving them the run around for their documents because of my colleagues' ill temper and lack of co-operation in giving service to the general public.
- 2) Telling the general public that we are open until 4:30 pm when my colleagues locked the doors before 4 pm without any approval from the authorities.
- 3) Because the manager Ash never informed me about the early closure.

I was sad and indignant because:

- a) Josie and Marina purposely gave the run around to the general public refusing to prepare their documents.
- b) They refused to give service to people and did their own personal work on the computer. They were singing and discussing the poetry Josie had written on the computer.
- c) Their communication with me was not civilized and they did not co-operate with me.
- d) Josie and others insulted me all day long.
- e) They were blaming me verbally and with gestures and facial expression because I was allowing the people into the office to give them service.
- f) They blamed me that because of me, they couldn't close the office earlier.

Along with humiliation, indignation and sadness, I experienced humor. So when Josie asked me if I knew how to put in the security code, I told her that I didn't know how to do it because I was a baby! Then I suggested that she pick me up like a baby and carry me out like a baby. But she did not carry me although she claimed that she was babysitting me. Marina and Kelly were around the door which is close to my cubicle. When I was about to leave the office, my three colleagues quickly went outside the office before me and waited there. I put the security code in and left.

Suspension without pay: ☹

This incident made me very depressed. In the New Year when I went to work, my manager Ash had received reports from my colleagues Josie, Kelly and Marina who were there on the New Year's Eve. Their reports were full of lies that made me look bad. They accused me of assaulting

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Josie. Manager Ash called me and gave me a disciplinary talk. In this south office, we had a security camera in that room where we worked. It was right behind my cubicle, where I sat and near to the exit door. I asked her to show me the pictures to prove their allegation of assault. She gave me a lousy reply that the camera was not working. Then, she asked me to go to work in our main office. I gave her my written report about the incident. After a few days, she suspended me from work without pay for an indefinite time. I stayed home for almost three months without pay. Meanwhile, I contacted the union to file a grievance.

Our director should have taken an action against manager Ash for the following:

- 1) Non-working camera because she was responsible to make sure everything should have been in working order, being the manager of the south office. I wasn't even sure if she was telling me the truth about camera not working. Perhaps, she said that camera was not working because she could not prove any allegations of assault charges in the films.
- 2) The director should also have taken an action against the manager for not informing me of early closure on the New Year's Eve. Because she did not inform me, I told the public that we were open till the end of the day. I don't know how many people would have come to our office and seen the door locked.

But what can I say about this poisoned office?

2 Corinthians 4: 8 to 11

8. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed but not in despair;

9. Persecuted but not abandoned; struck down but not destroyed;

10. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

11. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

Who is in danger? It's funny! ☺ *Thank you, Lord, for the retroactive pay.* ☺

During the third month of my suspension without pay, manager Ash called me to see her. My manager was informed by the union that if they suspended me for more than eleven days without pay, this grievance would go directly to arbitration. If the arbitrator found out that the whole office was poisoned, the arbitrator had the power to fire the entire office staff including the managerial staff and bring brand new employees. Ash and her superiors didn't want the grievance to go to arbitration under any circumstances. So, she told me that she would give me retroactive pay ☺ for the three months, minus ☹ the eleven days.

Wow! I got paid for staying home! ☺ Thank you Jesus! Then, she asked me to work at another branch office in the north. However, **they refused to pay me for eleven days** ☹ which is not at all justifiable! But what can I expect of this poisoned office?

Moving on to the Office in North:

People in the north branch were not too bad. It was a lot more tolerable than the south branch and nobody was as insolent towards me, as in the south branch. A few people were at least outwardly friendly. The supervisor Ruby and manager Haney were also okay with me.

Preparing for the Worst Circumstances:

Although I was called back to work, I knew in my heart that **they did it only to prevent themselves from being fired** but something worse might come later. Since I was back at work with retroactive pay, I took advantage of this situation to make some financial plans for the future.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Financial Needs:

I went to a financial institute to make arrangement for finances. They required me to produce proof of my income and job security. I gave them the initial letter, from the personnel department, which was given to me, when I was hired, and I gave my paystubs. I prayed, while I was waiting for them to verify my job situation and approve my application.

With a carnal mind, having a grievance history and being suspended from work, it was not easy to think that my application could be easily approved. I was concerned, because the personnel manager Stacy had heard my first two grievances in the main office, and she was not cooperative or understanding. She appeared to be pre-determined about her decision, before she could hear my side. She forbade me from taking the speaking engagements, even though I had very praise worthy reports from various hosts and it was part of my duty and my joy. She had sided with my supervisor, then. I believed that the personnel department had all the information about what was going on with my job situation, including various grievances and serious altercations with colleagues and the suspension from work. Despite all the negative circumstances, there was no need to fear because I could lean on Jesus, my savior.

Joshua 1: 9

.....Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

Proverbs 3: 25, 26

25. Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked,

26. for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.

Answer to Prayer: ☺

Within an hour, they called me to say that they had called the personnel department and everything was fine with my job and they approved my application for money. My guess was right, I was heading towards some undesirable financial needs and God provided for my needs in advance. Thank you, Jesus!

Although God did not create money, he still provides for our financial needs. Here is a scripture from the Bible about how Jesus provided the temple tax.

Matthew 17: 24 to 27

24. after Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?”

25. ‘Yes, he does,’ he replied.

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes – from their own sons or from others?”

26. “From others,” Peter answered. “Then the sons are exempt.” Jesus said to him.

27. “But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give to them for my tax and yours.”

Just as Jesus provided the temple tax, he miraculously provided my needs even though I didn't have good record in the personnel department. Now I felt secure; I could afford a lawyer in case if something goes wrong.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

The Assault Charges:

In this new office, supervisor Ruby checked with me about my holidays for the new calendar year. Now, Josie had laid assault charges against me. I received a notice from the crown's office to attend the court during my planned holidays! What a coincidence! It appeared to me that she waited a long time to bring charges against me and arranged for the court appearance day, just when I would be on my vacation! I was upset for a moment, but in a short while, I gathered my strength and I went to the court, earlier. While driving to the court, I played my worship music and rejoiced in the Lord. They took my fingerprints and picture, treating me like a criminal! I drove home rejoicing in the Lord, despite the circumstances. The Holy Spirit gave me a heart to sing praises to the Lord! *Thank you Church, for the worship tape! Thank you Lord, because you give me joy when I worship you!*

Scary Future: ☹

However, when I went on our pre-scheduled holidays with my husband, I was not in a very good mood. I felt I had a heavy rock on my chest and I was crushed under its weight. On my return to work, I met with my union. My union informed me that the case was out of their hands and that they could not do anything for me, because Josie had gone to the Crown. I was scared.

Luke 21: 12

.....They will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before the kings and governors, and all on account of my name.

I was nervous and falling apart. I felt a big heavy rock was laid on my chest. I did not want to go to prison. I was not willing to go through all these hardships as the scripture had warned me. I felt like, praying what Jesus prayed.

Mark 14: 36

“Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

I was not ready to drink the cup of suffering. I gathered some strength and imagined how I would serve the Lord if I had to go into prison but it was not a great feeling! I prayed, "If I have to go to prison Lord, give me the opportunity to minister to the prisoners." Then I prayed, "No Lord, I don't want to go to prison. I want to be with my family."

Stress Leave: *Thank you, Union! Your advice was excellent! May God prosper my union!*

The union advised me to see a doctor, and take a long stress leave. My family doctor understood my circumstances and I was able to take stress leave for a month at a time for several months. *Thank you, doctor!* This gave me time to cry, pray, recuperate, and regain strength. I also took legal consultation, read criminal laws, visited law libraries in the courts and universities, researched for precedents and communicated with lawyers.

Death in the Family: ☹ *I miss you, Mom! I am sorry, I could not visit you! I love you!*

Meanwhile, my mother passed away. I had been praying for her every day since I heard about her sickness. I could not visit her due to the court case. She was very forgiving by nature. Her most important advice to everyone was to forgive people. She was a very strong and devout Jain and forgiveness is one of the greatest principles in Jainism. I believe that the Lord has saved her soul because of my prayers and her forgiving nature. *Jesus loves you, mom! See you in heaven!*

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Dealing with the assault charges: *I refuse to sign a peace bond. I am innocent.*

Lawyer Josef was convinced that I did not assault my colleague. I informed him that I would not sign a peace bond because I had not committed any crime and he agreed.

Before The Court Dates:

I prayed to seek guidance from God concerning the oath because of the following scripture. I thought I should not take an oath on the Bible.

Matthew 5: 34 to 37 *Taking oath on Bible – Contrary to the Word of God!*

34. But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven for it is Gods throne;

35. or by earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King.

36. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.

37. Simply let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’, and your ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything beyond comes from the evil one.

God informed me that I would not have to say a single word in the court and that was exactly what happened throughout all the court hearings. So there was no question of taking an oath. Wow! God knew it all in advance!

It is my prayer today that courts will stop asking people to take oath on the Bible as it is contrary to the Word of God!

My Prayer for the Court Case:

Before the court hearing, I knelt and prayed. My pleading to God was based on the following scripture in the Bible.

Luke 19: 45, 46 *Jesus was very angry in the temple.*

45. Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling.

46. “It is written,” he said to them, “My house will be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of robbers.”

On the grounds of the above scripture, I pleaded to the Lord to send his holy angels to the court with whips to drive out all the unjust crown counsels, judges and court staff members and bring honest and just people. Let the court be a house of justice and not a house of robbers!

Disappointment with my lawyer: ☹ *Hey lawyer I did not spend money to sign a peace bond!*

My lawyer, Josef had arrived in the court prior to me. He was astonished that the entire staff in the court had changed. I figured that God had answered my prayers and changed the staff members. However, there was still a problem with the crown counsel and my lawyer. Josef met with the crown counsel prior to my arrival. The crown counsel told him to ask me to sign a peace bond. I refused to sign it. Josef then said disappointedly that if I didn't sign the peace bond we were going to lose the case! Then, he also threatened that if I didn't sign the peace bond, he was not going to represent me!

I prayed the hearing to be adjourned to save me from this coward lawyer. I was not prepared to sign a peace bond under any circumstances. I prayed for courage so that I would not give in to any pressure from the lawyer because I knew that I did not assault anybody. God answered my prayer and the hearing was adjourned. Alas! I had wasted my legal fees! Later, I took away all my documents from Josef's office. *The court case was making me poor!*

Review of the Lawyer's Bill: *I didn't hire a lawyer to get me to sign a peace bond!*

After this, I applied for a review of Josef's bill. My grounds were that he threatened not to represent me, if I didn't sign the peace bond at the last minute in the court. It was already agreed right

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

from the beginning that I was not going to sign the peace bond as I did not assault the accuser. There were also other grounds to reduce his bill.

The master in the registrar's office reduced the bill. Josef refunded me a portion of the legal fees that I had paid to him. This was a small victory but I wasn't happy that I had to put out lot more money.

Before the next hearing date, I met with many other lawyers. Most of them told me that they work with the crown counsel, side by side. Then, I met with one lawyer Len in downtown, and he told me that he didn't work with the crown counsel, the lawyer of the opposite side. I hired him, even though it did cost me more in transportation, parking and travelling time. I also made an agreement that I didn't want any dumping (withdrawal of representation) clause in the retainer's letter and he agreed that there wouldn't be any retainer letter. I also confirmed to him that I won't sign peace bond.

Troubles with my Second Lawyer and Crown Counsel: ☹

On my second hearing date, the crown counsel forgot his papers and adjourned the hearing. I suffered another loss of legal fees! I urged Len to sue the crown counsel and have him pay for my lawyer's bill for that day. My lawyer didn't agree with me and I suffered the financial loss because I was under too much stress to take the crown counsel to small claims court myself.

It is my prayer that in such circumstances, the **law should automatically provide that crown counsel pay the accused, the lawyer's fees incurred for that day as the hearing was adjourned because of his negligence.**

Secret Meeting between my Lawyer and Crown Counsel: ☹ *Question of integrity!*

On next hearing date, the crown counsel asked my lawyer to meet with him. Though, I expressed my desire to go with them, my own lawyer did not allow me in the meeting between them. Their meeting gave me a pain in my chest. **The law should prohibit lawyers to meet with the lawyers of the opposite side in the absence and without the consent of their client.** The way my lawyer asked questions to the witnesses, and what I read in the transcript, plus his cooperation in meeting with the crown counsel, in my absence, I became concerned about his integrity.

The hearing was adjourned, another financial loss! The crown counsel's behavior made me vigilant, thinking that he might have been bribed by my employer because he insisted on seeing my lawyer, in my absence. Besides, my accuser Josie's friend Suzy, one of my colleagues in the south office, worked for the Crown Counsel's office prior to working in our office. Suzy's husband was RCMP. My employer had treated me so badly that it caused me to be vigilant that they may have bribed the crown counsel. The crown counsel's behavior caused me to be more vigilant to think that he could bribe my lawyer. My doubts were further strengthened because my lawyer asked a question to the witness that was not appropriate and I read in the transcript something else my lawyer said that was completely wrong. It caused me to be vigilant and wise in dealing with my lawyer.

Being tough with my Lawyer: *Beware of lawyers!*

Then I wrote a letter to Len complaining about what he said in the court and that was in the transcript. Because I was paying for his time in the court, I mentioned, I wanted to tag along with him in the court. I told him it was inappropriate for him to keep me from coming with him when he met with the crown counsel. Next time, I made sure that since I was paying my lawyer for the entire day in the court, I would be with him even during lunch time and coffee break. I got him to promise me that he would not be meeting with the crown counsel, in my absence.

The court hearings were being adjourned and I was incurring a tremendous amount of legal fees. Now I could not get any more stress leave, and I had to return to work.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Lawyer's Genius Work: 😊

Finally, Len did something wonderful. He requested the branch of Freedom of Information to release all the documents, in my name, from my office. *Thank you, lawyer!*

Fire:

☹️ We Lost Everything That We Ever Had! ☹️



Just a few days later, I returned home from the office and found that our whole apartment building of forty-seven apartments was on fire. I met with my family, outside the building. We could not go home. We had lost everything that we ever had. During this time, all the families living in this apartment building became friendly. We lived in hotels together and socialized. *Thank you, Lord! It was comforting during this calamity.*

Gift from the Office: *Thank you for the gift, supervisor Ruby, manager Haney & colleagues!*

When my manager heard the news about the fire, supervisor Ruby and manager Haney took a collection in the office. Colleagues gave money generously. (In this office in the North, their minds were not yet poisoned). They sent a nicely organized food basket to my hotel. The left over money was carried forward for future occasions. *Thank you all for your generous contribution. God bless you.*

God's Provision: 😊 *Thanks to Holiday Inn. Thanks to BC Govt. Thanks to the City.*

Our municipality and our Provincial Government had made arrangements for us to go to Wal-Mart, a department store. They made arrangements for us to purchase, at their expense, our basic necessities and clothing, giving us \$200 per person. Both governments made arrangements for our lodging and hotel for a few days, while we looked for a place to live. The Holiday Inn gave us a few more days stay, free of charge. I convey my thanks to our city and our Provincial Government and to Holiday Inn. Thank you Jesus, we were not homeless! We stayed in lovely hotels with free food and with a swimming pool at no cost!

We prayed. There were forty seven families looking for a place to rent, at the same time. Even in the midst of this, God helped us find a place to rent. It was within walking distance from my husband's office. We found a small furnished house with a large basement. We had telephone equipment, living room set, bedroom set, dining sets, A to Z kitchen utensils, a dinner set, cutlery, towels, kitchen appliances and much more! Our landlord Kajol did not charge us for the few days left in that month and in addition, gave us one month rent free and did not ask for a deposit! God had brought kind people into our lives! I pray for my landlords that God will prosper them. It is my understanding and belief that God does look after kind people like our landlords. A friend gave us a TV; another friend gave us Bibles. A friend gave me Indian clothes. A friend gave us a stereo. A friend gave us worship tapes and CDs, one of my colleagues gave me a bike and another colleague gave me filing cabinet and a desk. Thank you Jesus, for good Christians, friends, colleagues and Samaritans!

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Thank you, all the people. May God take care of you, too! God, prosper my landlords! Holiday Inn! Lord, prosper our municipality and our BC Government. Lord, prosper my colleagues and friends. God provided us with more than we asked for. Here are a few scriptures about God's provision.

Matthew 6: 8

.....Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Matthew 6: 31, 32

31. So do not worry, saying, 'what shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or what shall we wear?'

32. For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows you need them.

Matthew 7: 11

If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

Ephesians 3:20

Now to whom who is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.

Thank you, all the Caring People of BC! May God bless you abundantly!

Meanwhile, the people of this Province heard the news of the fire and these good Samaritans started sending money to our co-operative society to help out the fire survivors. A few organizations and churches also heard about the fire and they sent money without being asked. Our Co-op had to open a bank account for the fire survivors as the donations were pouring in. These monies were distributed among forty seven families and each family received several hundred dollars.

We had a new pastor, Doug in our Home church. He was very kind and asked us what we needed. We had no more need as we had received almost everything and the money. We thanked him for his generosity. Despite people in the church contributed generously and gave us several hundred dollars, anyway. Members brought household items and clothes to the church basement for us to pick up. We were overwhelmed by their kindness and caring. Then, the same pastor asked my husband to do the church accounting for a fee. He just wanted to help us financially because he knew we had suffered a financial loss due to the fire. However, my husband was unable to take extra work. Some friends invited us for dinners. Thank you Jesus, for the wonderful friends!

Canadian Tire and Superstore sent coupons for a hundred dollars of free merchandise to all the fire survivors. More good Samaritans! Wal-Mart had their basement empty. They advertised that the general public could bring donated items for the fire survivors to their basement. It seemed like good Samaritans were everywhere! Donations poured in. There were sofa sets, coffee tables, dining sets, bedroom furniture, lamps, TVs, stereos, microwaves, irons, ironing boards, kitchen utensils, tea sets, dinner sets, hardware, clothes, hangers, shoes, winter coats, sweaters, mattresses, pillows, bed sheets, sewing accessories, suitcases for travelling, sports equipment. The list is endless. Sleep Country donated brand new mattresses. My husband's client helped us with his truck to bring some furniture for us. Hotels and motels gave tons of unopened bottles of cosmetics. A few businesses were closing down and they had hearts for us, so before closing their stores, they donated their inventory. Wal-Mart kept their basement open for us to pick out whatever items we needed. We went there, picked out our needed items and took them home. There were no cashier's line ups to waste any time! If some items didn't suit us, we brought them back. We did not want to grab everything. We knew there were forty seven families in need and therefore, we were taking them slowly, so others could have a chance. After a month, Walmart declared that they are going to close their basement by a certain date. So, we went. We picked up more kitchen items and cosmetics. I didn't

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

have to buy any soap, shampoo, conditioner, skin cream, etc. for more than two years. The clothes were beautiful and my colleagues were impressed. Generally, I need some alterations to the slacks that I usually buy from the stores. Amazingly these donated slacks fitted me perfectly. They had pockets, too. No need for alteration! Wow! God had bestowed blessings upon us! My brothers from India were very prompt and asked us how they could send money to us, the most efficient way. What a loving family! We convinced them that we had everything and we had no further need.

We were very thankful to Superstore, Canadian Tire, Sleep Country and all the hotels and motels who gave their merchandise to us for free. We were extra thankful to Wal-Mart for the use of their basement to help out the fire survivors. We were thankful to Holiday Inn for free stay in their hotel. Thanks to our Municipal and Provincial Governments. Thanks to various churches, friends, colleagues and anonymous people who sent cash and lots of useful items. We were thankful to our client for the use of his truck and his time to drive. Special thanks to our landlords for a month's free rent for the furnished home!

In our furnished rental home we had a large unfurnished basement. We picked up a lot of donated furniture and stored them in the basement for future use. Our wonderful insurance company paid us the funds very promptly. *My special thanks to this insurance company.*

Alone with God:

Our landlords, Kajols and our other neighbors were very nice. I failed to develop more close friendships with them as I was too busy writing letters to my lawyer and praying for my court case. Like Daniel, I prayed very fervently and frequently for my court case, at least three times a day as mentioned in Daniel 6: 10. Repeatedly, I took the shelter of the following scriptures.

John 2: 13 to 16

13. When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

14. In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves and others sitting at tables exchanging money.

15. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.

16. To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

Matthew 21: 12, 13 Pray according to these scriptures to remove the injustice from society!

12. Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and benches of those selling doves.

13. "It is written," he said to them. "My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers."

By the same token, I prayed to the Lord to send his holy angels, and people with whips to drive out all the unjust judges, unjust crown counsels and unjust staff members to remove them from the court so **that the court would be a house of justice with only just people.**

Cause of Fire:

A few parties were determined to be responsible for the fire and a lawsuit was filed against them which was later resolved through mediation.

Our insurance company had a wonderful law firm, who made the responsible parties pay additional money to the fire survivors, over and above the insurance. Jesus, prosper these lawyers!

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

(A caution to my readers: I am talking about two different lawyers: One law firm which was hired by the insurance company to settle the loss suffered by the residents due to the fire and another lawyer Len that I had hired to defend the accusations of the assault charges against me.)

When we were living in our rented home after the fire, I received a letter from the Freedom of Information branch saying that they had received the request for FOI through my lawyer Len, on February the 12th. Our fire had happened on Friday, February the 16th. As I went through the documents obtained through FOI, I also found communication between two managers of my company. They had thought that I would not have any fire insurance because I lived in an apartment and they were shocked to know that all the residents were covered by the fire insurance policy. The tone of their communication sounded like they were displeased to know that we were covered by the insurance. I became suspicious! Did anybody desire to make me poor? Did anybody desire that I should not have money to pay to my lawyer? I leave this matter in God's hands. He is righteous. He provided for all the needs of the fire survivors. God is just and kind. Our home was gone in the fire, but God gave us a new home with an indoor swimming pool! He had proved his words once again!

God is our provider! He gives us the desire of our hearts!



John 10: 10

The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Philippians 4: 19

And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Jeremiah 29: 11

“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and future.”

Employer not willing to co-operate: ☹

The employer did not cooperate well with the FOI request. They took a long time, although they knew that they should release all the information long before the court date. Instead, my lawyer received a bundle of thousands of pieces of paper, just one day before the court date. My lawyer showed the bundle to the judge and asked for an adjournment to go through all the documents. With a gesture, my manager conveyed to the judge not to grant an adjournment. However, the judge was

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

reasonable to grant an adjournment. Although, the adjournment was necessary, it was also one more financial burden for me!

My employer should have been held responsible for the burden of my legal costs for that day. It is my prayer that there should be a provision in the law that the judge can order the non-cooperative party to pay for the legal costs of the accused person without the accused having to sue them for their non-cooperation. The current legal system makes the accused poor and poor.

Dealing With Freedom of Information:

I went through all the papers day by day. Now, I was back to work. The employer had released thousands of documents, however, some of them were duplicates and many of them were incomplete. Some documents were useless and some important documents were missing. Although it looked like a big bundle, the employer did not release some very important items. FOI was very cooperative, but not my employer.

Dealing with the Lawyers: ☹

In my experience, lawyers are not very easy people to deal with. When I was young, my father had told me a few things about lawyers.

1. Never marry a lawyer.
2. Never rent from a lawyer.
3. Never rent to a lawyer.
4. Never do business with lawyers.

Then, I read something about lawyers in a newspaper. It said:

“A lawyer is like a sperm! A lawyer has one in a million chances to become a human being!”

I can recognize the frustration somebody had with lawyers and I can relate to it. I am talking about my defense lawyer concerning the assault charges. I didn't like the way my lawyer charged me.

The frustrating thing about a lawyer is that if a client writes to him saying that his bill is inappropriate, he may send another bill to read the letter of debate! If a client talks to him about the legitimacy of his bill, then he may send another bill for talking to him! It just goes in circles. A lawyer can deprive his client of his/her rights to discuss the case. A lawyer may even take a simple call that a receptionist can handle and he may charge for it at his professional rate! Even if a client calls him to make an appointment, a lawyer may take some time to look in his appointment book and charge at a professional rate for his time to make an appointment! A lawyer may offer a cup of coffee, but his time to get a cup of coffee, may be charged back, at a professional rate! I have also often seen they don't ask their secretary to do any work but they do it themselves and charge a handsome professional rate! When a lawyer makes a photocopy, although he charges for each and every copy for his paper and the ink, he may also charge for his time to make photocopies at a professional rate! Can anyone ever be polite and ask him: “How are you? How is your family? Did you have a nice weekend?” Yes, one can be polite with a lawyer but there is a price to pay for his time at a professional rate! A lawyer's meter is running like that of a taxi driver!

I made sure I had all the photocopies for my lawyer and not to drink tea, in his office. I tried not to be too friendly with him or else, it would cost me! Yet, there was pain when I received his bills.

I was in a vicious battle. I had to defend my case while I was still working with my accusers and people who supported my accusers, in my office. In addition, I was in constant arguments with my lawyer for the way he was charging his fees. I prayed. I brought this matter before the Lord. First of

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

all, my lawyer was not an eloquent speaker and I didn't like him for that reason but the Lord had asked me to keep him.

My heart pounded when I saw his mails. In theory, a mail from my own lawyer should be a thrill because he is going to defend me, protect me and get me out of the troubles! But in reality, they were heartaches. They were just bunch of stupid unjustifiable bills!

Cutting the Branch which you are sitting on: ☹ *Dear Mom, your advice is always good!*

Finally, the Lord led me to apply for a review of his bill. I applied to the registrar's office. My husband warned me that if I did this, he probably would not represent me in the court. I just had to be brave. If he did not represent me, I would have to represent myself. I did not have the capacity to represent myself unless the Lord helped me.

*I am sorry Mother, I went against your instructions!
But I do know that your instructions are always good.*



I am glad that I listened to the Holy Spirit. He had a purpose in doing this. Thank you, Holy Spirit. Because you gave me courage!

I was also going against my mother's teaching. My mother had taught me from the childhood, "Never cut the branch which you are sitting on!" It's a common sense anyway. (Actually, I didn't cut off the branch, just threatened to cut off the branch.) But, the Lord advised me to go to the registrar about his bill. I thought that if the Lord advised me to do it, the Lord would help me. I gave all my evidence to the registrar. This time, I didn't serve the evidence to the lawyer. I explained to the registrar that if I serve my lawyer all the evidence for this application, I was afraid that he would send me another bill to read that evidence. The registrar adjourned the hearing so I could serve him all my evidence. My lawyer Len was furious. He asked me to come to his office and sign papers to terminate his representation. This was a criminal court matter and it wasn't as easy for me to defend myself as in the other cases. I had concerns. If I did hire another lawyer, he would have to read all the material and it would cost me a fortune. I didn't even know if I could find a better lawyer and how to figure out if the lawyer is good! If I lost the case, the consequences would be to lose my job and reputation.

It wasn't a small claims court that involves only money! It was a criminal court case, far more serious than a matter of money! All I could say was that the Lord was my defender and my advocate. The Lord would help me to do it.

Isaiah 33:22

For the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our lawgiver; the Lord is our King, it is he who will save us.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

I went to Len's office. We again got into a conversation. I explained to him why I had to do this. The Lord changed his heart. He told me if I cancelled the application for the review of his bill, he would still represent me. We reconciled and also agreed upon other matters and a retainer.

Crown Counsel Taking Advantage at my Expense: ☹

Then, another bill from Len came in. He had charged me for his time because the crown counsel had sent him some information and was asking for some information from him. I was upset. I went to see Len.

I made it clear to him that I was not paying any bills from the crown counsel. If crown counsel wanted to talk to my lawyer, then the crown counsel should pay, but it would still be a conflict of interest! **Crown counsel should not use my lawyer's services at my expense!** I refused to pay those charges!! *Crown Counsel wanted services of my lawyer at my expense!*

Then, we agreed that Len would write a letter to the court that he no longer represented me, to keep the crown counsel out of the picture. This was good because I also believed that it served the purpose of keeping the crown counsel away from bribing my lawyer (if at all there was any possibility of bribing) and keeping my employer away from influencing or bribing the crown counsel. I was being vigilant. It gave me peace of mind. By the way, I must mention that every time I had a hearing, there was a different crown counsel for my file. They kept changing. I had prayed to remove all the unjust crown counsels, and the Lord had answered my prayers. We had the same judge all the time. I was happy about it.

Probably, because I made the application for the review of Len's bill, he made an effort and worked diligently. He worked intelligently and sincerely on my case. I believe that before, he was not sincere in preparing my case and therefore could not speak eloquently in the court. Then, I realized that taking my lawyer for the review of his bill motivated him to work diligently.

As far as the court was concerned, my lawyer had withdrawn from representing me. Therefore, the Crown counsel stopped bugging him and probably the employer could not influence the Crown counsel. Thank you Jesus! What a peace to my mind!

Just a few days before the hearing, my lawyer informed the court that he was representing me and then he sent documents to crown counsel under the charter of rights.

Last Court Date – Victory: ☺

As our case was called in, the newly assigned crown counsel stood up and withdrew the charges against me and I won the battle.



*Thank you!
My defense Lawyer!
You did a wonderful job!
Lord, prosper my lawyer!*

*Thank you
Lord!
Praise the name of Jesus!*

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Oh! What a relief! A great burden had been lifted up off my shoulders! I wouldn't have won this battle without the guidance and help from the Lord! I truly believe that Jesus is my advocate. My accusers were hurled down. Our God is judge and he is righteous. Finally, my lawyer also did a very good job. I thank my Lord Jesus for giving wisdom to my lawyer.

Psalm 50: 6 Thank you Holy Spirit, for you instructed me to stay with this lawyer.

And the heavens proclaim his righteousness, for God himself is judge.

I thank my God for his righteous judgment. He took me out of the vicious net of injustice and perjury from my colleagues and superiors and gave me freedom. Alas! The cost of my defense was almost about a year's wages. If this brings awareness in the society concerning workplace bullying, poisoned workplaces and being vigilant with lawyers, my sacrifice is worthwhile.

Change in Law Necessary:

It is difficult for any accused person to afford high costs of lawyers and running around to the courts. I couldn't afford it either and I had to compromise our social life, our living standards and incur debts. I can imagine that many accused may choose to sign a 'peace bond' for financial reason even if they may be innocent. In my entire court ordeal, the accuser and the perjurers did not have to pay anything to the police or to the court. They did not need to hire a lawyer. I believe and pray that the accusers and witnesses should be charged a court fee to the court for their statements to minimize any likelihood of perjuries unless they apply for a fee waiver, if poor. When the accusers and the witnesses are proved for their perjuries, they should be ordered to pay to the accused without requiring the accused to sue the accuser and the perjurers.

After Winning the Court Battle:

After my court battle was won, I continued to work for them. Gradually, God moved away almost all my harassers from my work place specially those who wanted me to quit my job. ☺

*Thank you, Jesus
I love you, because you go ahead of me, you are on my
right & you are on my left and you go behind me.
You surround me with your Holy presence.*

Psalm 23: 4

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 55: 22

Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE



All the harassing people were gone from the office. 😊 A few people were still unfriendly 😞 but not insolent and it didn't bother me. The Holy Spirit was my companion all the time. The Holy Spirit filled me with his peace, love and joy every day. 😊 All the staff members from the south office were completely wiped out including the accuser and the perjurers. 😊 The harassing supervisors, managers and directors were gone, too. 😊

Psalm 7: 15, 16

15. He who digs a hole and scoops it out falls into the pit he has made.

16. The trouble he causes recoils on him; his violence comes down on his own head.

😊 We had new supervisors, managers and directors. The atmosphere in the office was different now. New supervisor Barbie, new manager Bernice and new director Suzy were decent, honest and reasonable. However, there was still some poison left in some of my colleagues and they had spread that poison to some new comers, too. Despite everything, the Holy Spirit of God had given me peace, love and joy so that these things had a very negligible effect on me. I was able to help people in need and the general public showed confidence in me and they respected me. 😊 I was able to work there joyfully, helping the general public. 😊

My Husband's Sickness and Death: 😞

After the previous sickness, my husband enjoyed over two decades of healthy and active lifestyle. Then, he became sick again. He was hospitalized. Now we had another Pastor John in our

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Home Church. As soon as he heard about his sickness he came to the hospital almost every day. He spent hours with us and also in meeting with the doctors. I do not know how I would have managed without him. I thanked God for his pastoral care. Many of our friends came to visit him. Our relatives from India and other province came to help us out during his sickness and death.

*Thank you Jesus for these comforting people!
Thank you pastor for the pastoral care you gave us.
Thanks to all my family and relatives and friends!
You stood by us in the time of our need!*

Thank you manager, for your kindness!



Bernice was our new manager at work then. She was very kind when I could not go to work during his sickness. As soon as I informed her about his death, she sent me a beautiful bouquet of flowers in a beautiful crystal vase. Flowers do not take away the sorrow but they did show her sympathy and that was comforting. She was also very co-operative when I could not go to work after his death due to stress for some time.

Retirement:

I continued to work there for some time. I had been seeking God's guidance regarding retirement. One day, the Lord spoke to me to retire. Then, I retired.

Last Day in the Office: 😊 *Happy Retirement, Jasmine!*

When I reached work early in the morning of my last day, I was surprised; my cubicle was decorated with balloons and with 'Happy Retirement' signs.

Favor with the Authorities: 😊 *My sincere thanks to the manager and director*

Director, Suzy talked to me the day before and gave me good wishes. At the time of cake cutting, our manager Bernice presented me with retirement gifts of an album of our staff members, a beautiful travel diary from her with her loving farewell wishes and a beautiful silver chain with my initial on it. The chain is beautiful and marvelous! I was surprised. I thank God for the memorable gift that I can proudly show to people. Christians do not look for a favor with people but they look for a favor with God and God gives us favor with people.

Galatian 1: 10

Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

The beautiful silver chain from my office (who made me run to the criminal court) for my retirement gift was a sign of victory over all the harassment. I can proudly say that I overcame all the hurdles of my employment. As for the colleagues and managerial staff who harassed me in the past, I leave them in God's hands because He is righteous and just. He is also forgiving to those who repent and come humbly before the cross. I thank God that he chose me worthy of suffering for His glory!



*Jasmine,
Today is a closing chapter on one phase of
your life.
Enjoy your retirement!
It is also a new beginning and as you
embark on new journeys, here is a way to
record and capture special moments.
I wish you much happiness in your future
and good health.
Take care.*

*Bernice
Manager*

Romans 8: 28

And we know that in all things God works for good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

I wouldn't have been able to work there without the Lord's help for over seventeen years. God also gave me his Holy Spirit that gave me courage, endurance and wisdom to deal with all the problems and when I worshiped the Lord he filled me with his peace, love and joy and helped me to win the favor with my superiors. If you like, please join with me in prayer.

Prayer:

Father God, we come to you in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord and savior and by the authority of his precious blood. I pray for my readers that you will give them spiritual, mental, physical, psychological and emotional strength to stand firm during their times of trial, and you will give them wisdom like King Solomon to help them resolve their problems and above all you will give them amazing peace in the midst of their troubles. I pray for the joy and guidance of your Holy Spirit to overcome the hurdles in their lives and be victorious. I pray that they will be vigilant and wise in dealing with lawyers and authorities. I pray that first they will find favor with God and then favor with people. Amen!

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE



Our God answers prayers!

Prayer develops relationship with God through communication. Prayer is like talking to your best friend. Prayer has a power to change one's heart. Prayer has a power to change the entire nation. Prayer is experiencing God's presence. Prayer is abandonment of pride. Prayer is a transition from being independent to being dependent upon God.

Our God is forgiving when we come before him with repentance. We thank you Lord, for your grace and mercy. Convict us of our sins, give us a repentant heart and forgive us for our sins.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE



The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6: 9 to 13 KJV

9. After this manner therefore, pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

11. Give us this day our daily bread.

12. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

APPENDIX 1

JAINISM AND CHRISTIANITY COMPARISON

Author's Background:

I was born and raised in India in the Province of Gujarat in a Jain family. In our schools and colleges, students came from all walks of life, from various religions and we mixed well with one another. The population of Christian people was very thin. We did not have much exposure to Christianity and the few Christian people that we knew would mind their own business. Most of them didn't seem to be thrilled to talk about their God to other people. I guess most of them were Catholic. However, I didn't know any difference between Catholics and Protestants then.

Jain Teaching:

Jains have twenty four gods who achieved Moksha (a place considered higher than the heavens). These gods are called 'Tirthankaras'. There is a gap of an era between each Tirthankara. The last twenty fourth Tirthankara was Mahavir.

There is no more reincarnation (birth and death cycle) for all these twenty four gods. They all gave the message of non-killing, non-violence, forgiveness, mercy and many good morals to people before they went to Moksha. They refrain from having any attachment to any individual in the world. One of the principles in Jain school which I learned was that pure love does not exist in the world and all the relationships are based on selfishness. However, the Jain gods emphasized the importance of showing mercy to all living creatures, no matter how small or how worthless the creature may be. Therefore, Jains do not kill animals for food and they try to refrain from killing any form of life, as far as possible. There is also no custom of killing animals for offering sacrifices.

The History Class:

In school, we learned a little bit about Mahavir, the 24th god of the Jains. We also learned about Jesus Christ in our history text book, about his birth and crucifixion. According to history, Mahavir came into this world before Jesus Christ did. The history did not teach us anything about Easter or the resurrection of Jesus Christ or his healing power such as making the blind see, deaf hear, lame walk and such. The history class also did not teach us any divine purpose for the crucifixion of Christ, that he bore the sins of the world and he took the punishment of our sins to save the mankind, nor did it teach us that those who believe in him (Jesus Christ) will not perish but will have eternal life.

In schools and college, we used to get Christmas vacation but there had never been any vacation day for Easter or for the resurrection of Christ. I knew nothing about the resurrection.

The Healing Power

Jainism: I do not recall any specific events of healing in Jain religion. There have been numerous cases where people have fasted for many days and yet demonstrated good physical health and strength. There may have been the odd occasion of people receiving healing through faith.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Christianity: On the other hand, Jesus performed many miracles of healing the sick while he was on the earth and he gave the same healing power through prayers to those who believe in him. There have been numerous accounts of healing incidences after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His healing power is manifested even today and will continue.

Matthew 11: 5

The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the good news is preached to the poor.

Acts 3: 2 to 8

2. Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts.

3. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.

4. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!"

5. So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

6. Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

7. Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong.

8. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

The healing power of Jesus still works in people's lives today.

Jain Theory of Sin and Karma (Consequences of Sin):

We were taught in Jain school, that if you commit sins, you must pay for them and suffer the consequences of your sins, either in this life or in the future lives through reincarnation. We were also taught that there is a degree of sin. The consequences are according to the degree of sin.

Example of Consequence of Karma (Jain Story):

When Mahavir, the twenty fourth god of the Jains was quietly meditating, shepherds passing by asked him to look after their animals for a few minutes while they went to do some errands. When the shepherds came back, the animals were gone. Therefore, the shepherds got angry with Mahavir and drew nails through his ears because he did not listen to them. Mahavir remained silent continuing in his meditation and did not take revenge but forgave them.

Mahavir in his past life was a king and he had told his musicians to stop playing music when he fell into a deep sleep. However, when he woke up the next morning, he saw that the musicians had continued to play the music all through the night as they had forgotten his instructions. Then, Mahavir got angry and poured hot oil into their ears because they had not listened to him. Because of the sins of his past life, Mahavir had to suffer the revenge taken by the shepherds in the next life.

Jain Understanding of Crucifixion and Salvation:

Therefore, according to the Jain teachings we had received, I thought of the crucifixion of Christ as a punishment of his sins from previous lives.

Jain gods have emphasized that one must suffer the consequences of his/her sins either in this life or in future lives, just as Mahavir suffered for his own sins. However, when we forgive people for their sins, the pattern of revenge will not continue and that will lead to our salvation to achieve Moksha. They also taught us that we have to work for our salvation to achieve Moksha.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

The Purpose of the Cross According to the Bible

1 John 5: 11

This is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Isaiah: 53: 5

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

1 Peter 2: 24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Suffering of Jain gods:

None of the Jain gods have claimed to have paid for the sins of the world, nor did any of the Jain gods assure anybody that they could have eternal life just by believing in a Jain god.

Jain Teaching of Sufferings According to the Number of Senses:

Human beings and many other animals have five senses, such as: touch, smell, taste, hearing and sight. There are other forms of life which do not have all the five senses; some have four; some have three and so on. Jain scriptures taught us that if you kill a creature that has all five senses that would be a greater sin than killing a creature with less than five senses. The reason is that when a creature has more senses, it suffers more when being killed. A creature with lesser senses suffers less when being killed. For example, an egg is an unconscious life whereas a chicken has all the senses. It suffers more when it is killed than an egg does. Therefore, eating a chicken is a greater sin than eating an egg. However, an egg has the potential of having all the five senses and therefore, it is a greater sin to kill an egg compared to other primitive life.

The Jain religion taught us that in order to live we have to eat and we have to kill some forms of life. However, as far as possible we should kill the minimum. Therefore, Jains are vegetarians. Even among vegetation, some have more life than others. Therefore, Jains also do not eat anything grown underground because they have more bacterial life than the vegetation that grows on a plant. They also believe that green vegetation has more life than dry beans. Therefore, on certain days, they do not eat anything green but they only eat meals made of dry beans and grains. They often fast according to their capacity, for the same reason of not killing lives.

Christianity & Vegetarianism:

The Bible also talks about being vegetarian and I have come across some Jews and Christian people who are vegetarians or vegans.

Genesis 1: 29, 30

29. Then God said, 'I give you every seed bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

30. And to all the beast of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground – everything that has the breath of life in it – I give every green plant for food.' And it was so.

This meant that God gave fruits, vegetables and plants for all mankind, birds and animals to eat. We should not kill creatures. The above scriptures did not say that we were allowed to eat meat, underground vegetation or eggs or the dairy products. They are very much in line with Jain principles

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

of what we should eat except Jains have no objection to drink milk as they believe that a cow produces more milk and their calf do not starve. The Bible does not talk about eating seedless fruits.

Teaching of Jesus as per People's Capacity to Understand:

Jesus preached according to the capacity of people to understand. Jesus came on the earth at the time when peoples' hearts were hardened to the extent that they were able to perform ruthless actions like crucifixion. Therefore, the teaching of Jesus was limited to the extent that people can bear and understand. Because of the hardness of their hearts, mankind was allowed to eat meat. Here is what Jesus says in the Bible.

John 16: 12

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear."

Restrictions about Meat as per Bible:

According to the Bible life is in the blood and therefore, man should not eat blood. Here are few scriptures about some restrictions when eating meat.

Leviticus 17: 10 to 12

10. Any Israelite or any alien living among them who eats any blood – I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from his people.

11. For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

12. Therefore I say to the Israelites, "None of you may eat blood, nor may any alien living among you eat blood."

Leviticus 19: 26

Do not eat any meat with the blood still in it.

Acts 15: 29

You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality.

There are scriptures throughout Old and New Testament that prohibits eating blood. Lately, I have seen many videos and on television shows about the cruelty of animals in butchering. Therefore, it is better not to eat any meat at all as it may have been from strangled animals. In any case, it is always safe not to eat meat. That way, we will definitely obey the command of God concerning food just as Daniel refrained from eating meat.

Daniel 1: 8

But Daniel resolved himself not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official to show favor and sympathy to Daniel.

Bible generally does not prohibit meat, however, it is written according to the capacity of people to understand.

Hebrews 5: 11 to 14

11. We have much more to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

- 12. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!*
- 13. Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.*
- 14. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

My understanding of the above scriptures is that the Bible is written for people who are in infant stage and slow to understand and therefore, God has allowed people to eat meat with the exception of blood.

Fasting

Many Jains fast a lot. The principles of fasting in the Jain religion are basically to refrain from killing lives. Some devout Jains have often fasted for forty days living only on water.

Jesus taught that fasting was to spend time with God, to minimize distractions from prayers, to receive guidance from God, to come closer to God and for effectiveness of prayers. Fasting opens our ears to God. We can hear what God has to say to us. Jesus also said a certain type of **demons can go away only by prayer and fasting**. Some people may be possessed by demons or being oppressed by demons. It is important to fast and pray in such troublesome times to drive away demons. Jesus and some prophets have fasted for forty days.

Matthew 6: 16 to 18

- 16. When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrite do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth; they have received their reward in full.*
- 17. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,*
- 18. so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

Here is an example where Jesus explains certain kind of devil can go away by prayer and fasting.

Matthew 17: 14 to 21 - KJV

- 14. And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him and saying,*
- 15. Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.*
- 16. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.*
- 17. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me.*
- 18. And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.*
- 19. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, why could not we cast him out?*
- 20. And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*
- 21. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.*

Here is an example where fasting opened the ears of disciples to hear God and receive directions from the Holy Spirit.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Acts 13: 2, 3

2. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

3. So after they have fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

Acts 14: 23

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord in whom they had put their trust.

Esther 4: 16

Go, gather together all the Jews that are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maid will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.

Nehemiah 1: 4

When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

Forty Days Fast

I have heard frequently among Jains that some people have fasted for forty days. Similarly, here are also a few examples of forty days fast in the Bible.

Exodus 34: 28

Moses was there forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water.

1 Kings 19: 7, 8,

7. The angel of the Lord came back a second time and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you."

8. So he (Elijah) got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he travelled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

Luke 4: 1, 2

1. Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert,

2. where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days and at the end of them he was hungry.

Caring for Creatures, Birds and Animals

Jains are merciful to all types of creatures, so as not to hurt them. They provide them with food, water and whatever care is necessary.

The Bible also talks about God taking care of all creatures, although human beings are more valuable than all other creatures because man is made in his image and likeness. Here are the scriptures.

Matthew 6: 26

"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Genesis 1: 26

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth; and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Non-violence and General Moral Standards

The Jain principles of non-violence are microscopic, being careful about any form of life, no matter how small it may be. I have not learned about any rituals regarding sacrifice of any kind of animals because Jains are non-violent. The Bible also talks about non-violence, but not to the extent that the Jain religion preaches. The Jain religion also preaches general moral standards such as not to lie, not to steal, not to cheat, etc. Both Jain and Bible teaching about non-violence go as far as being kind and caring towards everyone including your enemies.

Bible Teaching about Non-violence and moral standards

Exodus 20: 13 to 17

13. You shall not murder.

14. You shall not commit adultery.

15. You shall not steal.

16. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

17. You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Matthew 5: 44 to 47

44. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45. That you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

46. If you love those who love you, what rewards will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

47. And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not the pagans do that?

48. Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Forgiveness

Jain gods taught us that we must forgive and should not continue in revenge. This is how we can bring the end of birth and death cycle.

The greatest principles in Jainism are non-violence and forgiveness. Some very ritualistic Jains perform a ceremony every night to confess their sins verbally to every living being and ask for forgiveness. Some less ritualistic Jains do it once a year. On that auspicious day Jain people ask for forgiveness from their family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, and all the people they know, if they have hurt them knowingly or unknowingly, by action, by words or by thoughts. Jains also send such letters and cards to those who cannot be approached personally. This is the day of reconciliation. Jains believe in being repentant and they believe that asking for forgiveness decreases our sufferings due to sin and it helps us to reconcile with each other. I have a great admiration for the principles of forgiveness and reconciliation in the Jain religion.

The Bible also teaches about repentance and forgiveness.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Ezekiel 18:21

But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die.

Acts 3: 19

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

Matthew 6: 12

“Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

Luke 17: 3, 4

3. “If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.

4. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, ‘I repent,’ forgive him.”

The teaching of Jesus goes far beyond forgiveness. He commands his followers to pray for those who hurt and ill-treat them.

Matthew 5: 44, 45

44. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45. that you may be the sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous.

Love

The Jain religion taught us that ‘pure love does not exist in the world.’ What we think of as ‘love’ is a false image of attraction and a shadow of selfishness. There is an element of selfishness in all kinds of relationships which we view as love, whether it is between parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, friends or between any individuals. The Jain religion taught about the non-existence of love but emphasized that we must be merciful. My heart agreed with the teaching of mercy, but I had trouble understanding that love does not exist.

Personal Experience: Despite the Jain teaching of the non-existence of pure love, we felt greatly loved among our family members, parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, friends, neighbors, teachers, etc. and therefore, it often confused me about the ‘non-existence of love’ - theory of Jainism. In our home we deeply cared for one another.

My sister Lata went out of town when I was young; my love for her caused me to miss her. When she came back home, our hearts rejoiced and the whole family pitched in to celebrate her coming and I knew it was the love in our family. I surely had trouble understanding Jain scripture that denies the existence of pure love.

When my brother Raj had his annual exams in the final year in school, my grandmother was visiting us. He had two papers to write each day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. He would come home for lunch between the two exams. My grandmother kept a nice and hot lunch ready at his arrival time, made my brothers sit comfortably at the lunch table and stood by him as she fanned him manually because the weather was very hot. That was my grandmother’s love in action.

When I was a teenager, my father passed away. My entire family took care of my education and marriage expenses. They were like parents to me. They fulfilled the responsibility of my late father because they loved me.

We took care of each other. During the sickness of any family member, all the family members pitched in to help the one who was suffering.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

When my first nephew was born, I felt overwhelming love towards him so that I would do anything for him. It felt like there was a fountain planted in my heart where the love was just springing and flowing and pouring out without bounds. I could not understand where this love was coming from. It felt supernatural. I had no control over it. I just loved this baby. At this time, I doubted the Jain theory of non-existence of love. I also felt that there was some supernatural power that planted this fountain of love in my heart. However, I could not understand and I had no answer and there was nobody who could explain this to me. I thought maybe there was supernatural power whom people call 'God' and maybe God planted this love in my heart, but I had no resources or time to research the subject. Then, after many years, I read this in the Bible.

The Love of Jesus:

Jesus loves everybody whether you are a Jain or a Hindu or a Muslim or a Jew or a Christian or from any other religion and therefore, he came to die for all mankind to save them from their sins so that they can have eternal life. We must believe in him and receive this love.

John 3: 16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

This verse made more sense to me and it helped me to understand how I felt the fountain of love springing forth in my heart when my nephews and my children were born and how we felt close to our friends and family members.

Then I read the following in the Bible which made more sense to me.

1 John 4: 7 to 12

7. Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

8. Whoever does not love, does not know God, because God is love.

9. This is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only son into the world that we might live through him.

10. This is love: not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

11. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

12. No one has ever seen God; but if we love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

1 Corinthians 13: 4 to 7

4. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

5. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking. It is not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs.

6. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

7. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres.

This description of love in the Bible made sense to me. It surely defines what love is and makes a person aware that if we cannot find these qualities, our love is lacking and it is not complete. Growing up in a loving home, I can relate with Bible scriptures on love more than Jain scriptures that deny the existence of pure love. There is a possibility that some relationships do exist with motives of selfishness but in my opinion, it should not imply that love does not exist at all in the world.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Sacrificial Love of Christ:

When I found in the Bible that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, that our sinful debts are paid for us by his death on the Cross and that he has covered us with his precious blood to make us right with God the creator, I was amazed to know of God's offer of our salvation through his blood.

1 John 1: 7

'But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His son, purifies us from all sin.'

Romans 5: 8

'But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.' –

1 Peter 2: 24

'He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness: by his wounds you have been healed.'

It was comforting to know through these scriptures that Jesus paid for our sins and we do not have to reincarnate to pay the debt of our sins. All twenty four gods of the Jain religion gave the message of forgiveness but none of them claimed to have given payment for the sins of mankind. One of my favorite Christian hymns sings about how we owed a debt for our sins that Christ paid although he did not owe it.

Addressing Your Earthly Father:

I grew up calling my earthly father "Bhai". In my mother tongue, the meaning of 'Bhai' is brother. We have many words in our language for 'father'. However, most of our neighbors and relatives called their father 'Bhai' meaning a 'brother'. Because everybody was doing it, I never questioned my parents as to why we were taught to address our father as our brother. I do not recall reading any Jain scripture concerning this. However, I have not studied all the Jain scriptures. Then, this is what I read in the Bible:

Matthew 23: 9

And do not call anyone on earth 'father', for you have one Father and he is in heaven.

I was surprised to see that, though I did not know where some customs that I grew up with came from and though I did not grow up as a Christian, yet I found the answer to my old childhood tradition in the Bible.

Women Issues:

Growing up as a Jain we had a custom in every home that when a woman has her monthly period she cannot touch any object in the home because anything she touches is defiled. She cannot cook for three to four days. The food is brought to her. This practice is slowly disappearing from the society. Then I found similar teachings in the Bible.

Leviticus 15: 19 to 21

19. When a woman has her regular flow of blood, the impurity of her monthly period will last seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean till evening.

20. Anything she lies on during her period will be unclean, and anything she sits on will be unclean.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

21. Whoever touches her bed must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening.

22. Whether it is the bed or anything she was sitting on, when anyone touches it, he will be unclean till evening.

I have not seen Christians observing these rules and the explanation that I have heard is that we are washed in the blood of Jesus and therefore, purified. Therefore, there is no need to observe these rules.

Peace among all Creatures – Similarity between Christianity & Jainism

When the Jain god Mahavir preached his message on the earth, before going to Moksha, all creatures were present in his audience. Human beings including little children, birds, animals and all kinds of living beings including wild animals sat together in peace and harmony, without hurting each other. It was the same way with all the twenty four gods. Mahavir came on this earth more than five hundred years before Christ.

Bible also talks about such peaceful times in the future.

Isaiah 11: 6 to 9

6. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together, and a little child will lead them.

7. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

8. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.

9. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountains. For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Wow! What an astounding similarity between Jainism and Christianity!

Peace

Despite the fact that Jain gods demonstrated peace among all creatures, Jain scripture teach us to ask for peace from all planets and stars in the sky whereas the Bible does not mention about asking for peace from planets and stars because Jesus gives us peace. Bible forbids praying to the planets and stars.

John 14: 27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 16: 33

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

John 20: 19

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for the fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Worshipping Idols

There are three sects among Jain people. Two of them worship statues and the third sect does not worship statues. I was brought up in an idol worshipping sect of the Jain religion whereas my husband was brought up in a non-idol worshipping sect of Jainism.

Jain scripture neither advocates idol worship nor does it forbid idol worship. Some Jain people cannot worship the gods without having some forms or deity. So, they make statues of all twenty four gods according to their peculiar character in history and worship them.

In our home we bowed to our parents and grand-parents in respect and to receive blessings from them. When they were dead, we bowed to their pictures.

When I became familiar with the Bible, I learned about God's denial of idol worship because the Christian God is not dead but God lives forever and it makes perfect sense that we do not worship a photo or image of someone who is alive.

Psalm 115: 4 to 8

4. But their idols are silver and gold, made by the hands of men.

5. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but they cannot see;

6. they have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but they cannot smell;

7. they have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but they cannot walk; nor can they utter a sound with their throats.

8. Those who make them will be like them and so will all who trust in them.

Christians are able to worship the invisible God without making an idol because the Holy Spirit communicates with believers.

Joh 10: 27

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

2 Kings 20: 5

This is what the Lord, the God of your father says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you...

Bible teaches that the creator, God Almighty is concerned about peoples' lives. God's amazing peace, love and joy are manifested into lives of the believers by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Jains do not have the Holy Spirit of God. Jain gods do not interfere with the personal lives of Jains except through their initial message to them. There is no personal interaction between a Jain and his god Mahavir. Some Jains require an image of god to worship and follow his teaching because Mahavir, after achieving Moksha, no longer communicates with Jain people because Mahavir does not have worldly attachment.

Worshipping Creation:

Jain scriptures are full of worship of the sun, moon, stars and various planets. The Bible, however, denies worship of the stars, the moon and the planets because God created them and it makes perfect sense not to worship the creation because we worship the creator.

Deuteronomy 4: 19

And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars – all the heavenly array – do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things the Lord your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Creation Theory:

Jain gods do not claim to be creators nor do they have any theory on how the universe was created. The only answer I have heard about creation is: "This world has been going on since infinite times and it will go on till infinite times." This did not satisfy my soul as I thought there had to be a beginning. The Jain religion condemned the creation as being useless because one life depends upon the other. The dog eats the cat and the cat eats the mouse and the same situation goes on among all living beings and therefore, the world is full of selfishness; it is useless and pure love does not exist in the world.

The creation theory we learned in school was that the simple life started with amoebas and we came from monkeys. This theory did not satisfy my soul. Then I read in the Bible and learned for the first time that man came from the dust of the earth and it made a lot of sense to me.

The Creation of Man and woman

Genesis 1: 26, 27

26. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

27. So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2: 7

'And Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living being.'

Genesis 2: 18

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Genesis 2: 21, 22, 23

So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the space with flesh.

22. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23. The man said, "This is now the bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman' for she was taken out of man."

The concept of mankind formed from the dust of the earth was totally new to me; the concept of woman coming out of man was also new to me. I had never heard or read it before. The Bible verses made more sense to me. It was easy to understand that we must have come from the dust, because we have learned in school that all the metals and elements that we have in our body, such as iron, calcium, gold, silver and many more, these elements are also in the earth.

In school, when I learned about the structure of the eye, the ear, the respiratory system, the digestive system, etc. I wondered who made us. I knew that my parents had nothing to do with the inner creation of every organ in my body. I thought maybe there is a creator whom lots of people address as 'God'.

When I was learning about the solar system and the structure of an atom, and the complexity of the universe, I was flabbergasted and I began to think, 'maybe there is a creator whom people call God'.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

As a child, I used to pick flowers and fruit from our garden. When I thought about nature being so creative, beautiful and delicious, complex and intelligent, I started to think, there must be a great power that created all things. Perhaps God is that great power. However, I shut that thought in my mind and went about my daily living.

When I had access to a Bible, I learned the following.

Romans 1: 20

'For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made. So, that men are without excuse.'

The above scripture just affirmed what I thought as a child and as a student.

Hebrews 1: 10, 11, 12

10. In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

11. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment.

12. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

Penalty for Disobedience – Not the Original Plan of God

I was told by a Jain teacher that all creatures die and that's what the universe is all about. The birth and death cycle continues for numerous years until the soul achieves 'Moksha'.

Whereas I learned in the Bible that it was the sin of disobedience that brought death but it was not the original plan of God the creator that a man should die. Growing up as a Jain it was a totally new concept for me.

Genesis 2: 16, 17

16. and the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;

17. but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

So, death entered in mankind because of the disobedience of man and woman. Here is what the Bible says how death entered in mankind.

Genesis 3: 1 to 19

1. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman: "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

2. The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,

3. But God did say, 'you must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

4. "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman.

5. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6. When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

7. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

8. *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*
9. *But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"*
10. *He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."*
11. *And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded not to eat from?"*
12. *The man said, "The woman you put here with me-she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."*
13. *Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "the serpent deceived me, and I ate."*
14. *So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly, and you will eat dust all the days of your life.*
15. *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."*
16. *To the woman He said, "I will greatly increase your pain in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to your children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."*
17. *To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you 'you shall not eat of it', "cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.*
18. *It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.*
19. *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*

Communication

Jain gods gave the message of salvation before achieving Moksha. Once they achieved Moksha, they do not have any further attachment to the world and they do not directly communicate with Jain people as they are detached from the worldliness. In contrast, the Bible declares that God cares for us and communicates with us.

The Bible tells us that God the creator cares for every human being and every creature and God wants to communicate with us. Here are some scriptures where God invites us to communicate with him and showing how much God cares for us.

Matthew 7: 7 to 11

7. *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be open to you.*
8. *for everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to whom he knocks the door will be opened.*
9. *Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?*
10. *Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?*
11. *If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!*

God helps people in their time of need. We can cry out to God and he answers us.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Psalm 121: 1 – 2

- 1. I lift my eyes to the hills- where does my help come from?*
- 2. My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

Jeremiah 29: 13

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 33: 3

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great unsearchable things you do not know.

John 10: 27

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

Wow! God calls us to talk to him! He promises us that he will answer us. Wow! We can hear his voice! I found this to be very amazing! I have never heard such wonderful things in Jain scriptures.

Weddings

The Jain religion does not specifically promote weddings. Celibacy is highly recommended. Male Jain priests do not live with females nor do they touch any female. Female Jain priests do not live with males nor do they touch any male. Jain priests do not participate in weddings as they are detached from the worldliness.

When Jains have wedding in their homes, Jain priests are not invited to the wedding and they would not come either as they are detached from the worldliness. Jains usually hire a Hindu or a Brahmin priest to perform a wedding ceremony. I have not seen any wedding ceremony in Jain scriptures. The Brahmin priest usually talks in the old Sanskrit language of the scripture which is usually Hindu. The guests usually enjoy a good social time.

Although the celibacy is highly valued in Jain religion, weddings are highly honoured among Jains. It is considered to be once in a life time occasion for the couple who is getting married, so they will try to invite most of the people they know and treat them with tremendous hospitality serving delicious foods and drinks. The host will not ask for gifts for the bride and the groom, but the guests will bring gifts for the bride and the groom, anyway. They have no custom of holding a wedding shower either because they will accept gifts only if people bring them at the wedding, but they will not ask for gifts.

My observation of Christian wedding is that Christian priest usually performs the wedding ceremony and explains the scriptures regarding wedding. The guests listen to the priest. That sounds good! A shower is held for the bride prior to the wedding to receive gifts. People who are invited to shower may not be invited to the couple's reception. Quite often, food or drinks are not served during wedding and there appears to be a lack of hospitality and the atmosphere is as dull as a funeral.

The Bible talks about the relationship between a husband and a wife.

Genesis 2: 22 to 24

22. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman', for she was taken out of man."

24. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

Deuteronomy 24: 5

If a man has recently married, he must not be sent to war or have any other duty laid on him. For one year he is to be free to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married.

Matthew 19: 4 to 6

4. "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the creator 'made them male and female,'

5. and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?

6. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

Colossians 3: 18 to 19

18. Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

19. Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

Here is an example of how the weddings were in the time of Jesus.

John 2: 1 to 11

1. On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there,

2. and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

3. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

4. "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

5. His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6. Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty or thirty gallons.

7. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

8. Then he told them, "Now draw out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so.

9. And the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said,

10. "Everyone brings out the choice wine first, and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

11. This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

The Bible puts great emphasis on the relationship between husband and wife. Bible also talks about the hospitality at the time of wedding. The host was concerned about serving wine to his guests. However, most of the Christian weddings today are plain and very dry and lacking in hospitality resembling a funeral type atmosphere. No foods or drinks are served at the weddings. Reading the Bible, it is my opinion that wedding should be a time of celebration with food and delicious drinks. Here is what the Bible says:

Revelation 19: 9

Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

It is my understanding from the scriptures that marriage is highly honored by God and it should be celebrated with food, drinks and a supper.

Deaths and Funerals

When a Jain priest dies, Jain people take care of the cremation. When a Jain person dies, Jain priests are not informed and they would not come as they are detached from worldliness. However, relatives and neighbours of a Jain family come to the aid of the family where the death has happened. They come to comfort the family and the men put the body on bamboo sticks and carry it to the cremation ground and cremate the body. The relatives and neighbours will prepare basic nutritious foods and convince the family to eat. They will also feed those who come back from the cemetery as they are tired from walking to the cemetery carrying the body.

In contrast, when a Christian person dies the funeral and burial or cremation is looked after by commercial funeral homes who charge money to the family. Usually the costs are very high. A memorial is held at the church where a Christian priest gives a sermon and they all worship the Lord. The close family of the dead person is required to make all the arrangements for the memorial including providing food including desserts (not just basic food) for all the people who attend the memorial service. People eat and drink as if it is an occasion to celebrate and the Christians call it a 'celebration of life of the dead person'. A Christian memorial for the dead person often looks like a wedding party, people eating and drinking and socializing.

I have been baffled by this tradition of celebration, of eating and drinking after the death of a person and the close family having the burden to provide food for people. I have looked in the scriptures and have not found any verse that promotes eating and drinking after the death of a person or of the close family having to provide food for people. John 11 gives an account of the death of Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha whom Jesus raised from the dead. When Lazarus died, the sisters were weeping but they were neither eating and drinking or celebrating nor were they compelled to provide food and drinks for their visitors.

John 11: 32 to 35

32. When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

33. When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

34. "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

35. Jesus wept.

In Mark 5, there is another example of death. This was the death of the daughter of the synagogue ruler Jairus.

Mark 5: 38

When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly.

I have not seen any example in the Bible where the family had to prepare and arrange for food for those who came to comfort the close family of the dead person or people drinking and eating like a party time.

In my opinion, this Christian tradition of the family members of the dead person having to prepare food and drinks for those who come to comfort them does not sound Biblical and it may be burdensome to the family where the death has occurred. It sounds burdensome having to organize

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

food for those who come to comfort them and it also sounds like a financial burden for those who cannot afford it.

Personally, I admire my old Jain culture where friends and relatives bring food for the family of the dead person and convince the family to eat.

Personally, I find the Christian tradition very unfair for the family of the dead person. Where the death has occurred, the close members of the family have enough on their plate. In addition to having to suffer the loss of the loved one, having to suffer paying high costs of the funeral home, they have to bear this extra expenditure and the responsibility to prepare food for those who come to comfort them!

It is my prayer that someday these traditions will change and the wedding may be a time of rejoicing and a genuine hospitality with foods, drinks and a marriage supper. And the funerals should not be a time of eating and drinking. It is my prayer that the church will be willing to provide food and the Christians will be kind to bring foods for the family of the dead person and convince them to eat, just like my old Jain tradition. Family of the dead person should not have to carry the burden to provide foods for those who come to comfort them.

Resurrection:

The concept of resurrection was entirely new to me. I had never heard about it growing up as a Jain and living mainly in Jain and Hindu society. Being born in a Jain family, we were taught that once the person dies, he/she never comes back. I had not read a single example of resurrection in Jain scriptures.

Is Jesus Dead or Alive? If alive, where is he?

When I was totally ignorant about the Bible and Christianity, a couple of women approached me to tell me that Jesus is alive today and I asked them, "Where is he then and how can I meet Him?" But they could not answer my question and our conversation did not go further. Then, after many years, I read in the Bible about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Luke 24: 1 to 7

1. On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb.

2. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb,

3. But when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

4. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them.

5. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "why do you look for the living among the dead?"

6. He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee:

7. The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again." Then they remembered his words.

Then, I read in the Bible numerous accounts of Jesus appearing to people after his crucifixion and death, walking, talking and eating with people. Here is one example.

Luke 24: 13 to 32

13. Now the same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

14. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened.

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

15. *As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them;*

16. *But they were kept from recognizing him.*

17. *He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast.*

18. *One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one living in Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened there in these days?"*

19. *"What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.*

20. *The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him;*

21. *But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.*

22. *In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning*

23. *but didn't find his body. They came and told us they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive.*

24. *Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."*

25. *He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!*

26. *Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"*

27. *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.*

28. *As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther.*

29. *But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over. " So he went in to stay with them.*

30. *When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.*

31. *Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him and he disappeared from their sight.*

32. *They asked each other. "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"*

Act 1: 3

After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Then, I found the answer in the Bible where is Jesus now.

Acts 1: 8 to 11

8. *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

9. *After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.*

10. *They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.*

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

11. *“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”*

So, here I found my answer: Where is Jesus now?

Death, Reincarnation, Resurrection, Rapture and Moksha

Reincarnation: The Jain religion taught us that all creatures die and we continue in the birth and death cycle to pay for our own sins. After death, a soul can come back to earth in any form of life or go to heaven if the soul has done good deeds or go to hell if the soul has done bad deeds.

Moksha: When a soul does not commit any more sins then a soul can achieve Moksha which is the end of the birth and death cycle. It usually takes thousands of years for a soul to deserve to achieve Moksha and the soul has to earn it. Moksha is considered higher than heavens. In Moksha, a soul has no body and does not suffer any pain. A soul in Moksha has no attachment to any other soul or any people on earth. I do not recall any mention of joy in Jain scriptures and they deny the existence of love.

Resurrection: In Jainism we also learned that once a person dies, that person never comes back to life. In Jain scriptures, I do not recall reading about a single example of resurrection after death like Jesus was resurrected.

Rapture: In the Jain scriptures, I have not read of anybody taken up to heaven from the earth like some examples in the Bible.

Going to Heaven from Earth without Dying

There are several examples of rapture in the Bible where a person has been taken into heaven without going through death. One of the examples is Enoch.

Genesis 5: 24

Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Another example is the prophet Elijah.

2 Kings 2: 1 to 12

1. *When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal.*

2. *Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here; the Lord has sent me to Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel.*

3. *The company of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha and asked, “Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today?” “Yes, I know,” Elisha replied, “but do not speak of it.”*

4. *Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here, Elisha; the Lord has sent me to Jericho.” And he replied, “As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they went to Jericho.*

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

5. The company of the prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, “Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today?”

“Yes, I know,” he replied, “but do not speak of it.”

6. Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here, the Lord has sent me to the Jordan.” And he replied, “As surely as the lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them walked on.

7. Fifty men of the company of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan.

8. Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

9. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?”

“Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit,” Elisha replied.

10. “You have asked a difficult thing.” Elijah said, “Yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours – otherwise not.”

11. As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

12. Elisha saw and then cried out, “My Father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!” And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them apart.

I have not heard or read in Jain literature any example of any person taken up to heaven from the earth without going through a cycle of death.

Reincarnation

The Jain scriptures talk about reincarnation and paying for sins in this life or in future lives. According to Jain scriptures, a soul can go to heaven or hell or can be reborn on earth in any form of life. Occasionally, I have had conversations with Christians about reincarnation and they do not agree with the reincarnation theory. However, I have found a scripture in the Bible and in my understanding it talks about reincarnation.

Matthew 17: 11 to 13

11. Jesus Replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things.

12. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.

13. Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

My understanding of the foregoing scripture is that John the Baptist was a reincarnation of the prophet Elijah. Therefore, I will not rule out completely the reincarnation theory in Christianity. However, I understand that we are not reincarnated to pay for our sins, when we are in Christ Jesus and covered by his blood. It is also my understanding that a human being can only be reborn as a human being because man is made in the image of God.

Twenty Four:

Jains have twenty four gods who never claimed to be creators but preached the message of peace, non-violence, non-killing, mercy, forgiveness and many good morals. Jain gods did not preach love and joy. They deny the existence of love. They claimed to have achieved ‘Moksha’, which is

OVERCOMING THE HURDLES OF LIFE

higher than all the heavens and it is the end of the birth and death cycle. I do not know if there is any rationale behind the number 24 referring to Jain gods.

Revelation 4: 9, 10

9. Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives forever and ever and ever,

10. The twenty four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever.

The number 24 coincides in Jain scriptures and the Bible but I cannot say if there is any connection. Possibly there may be some connection.

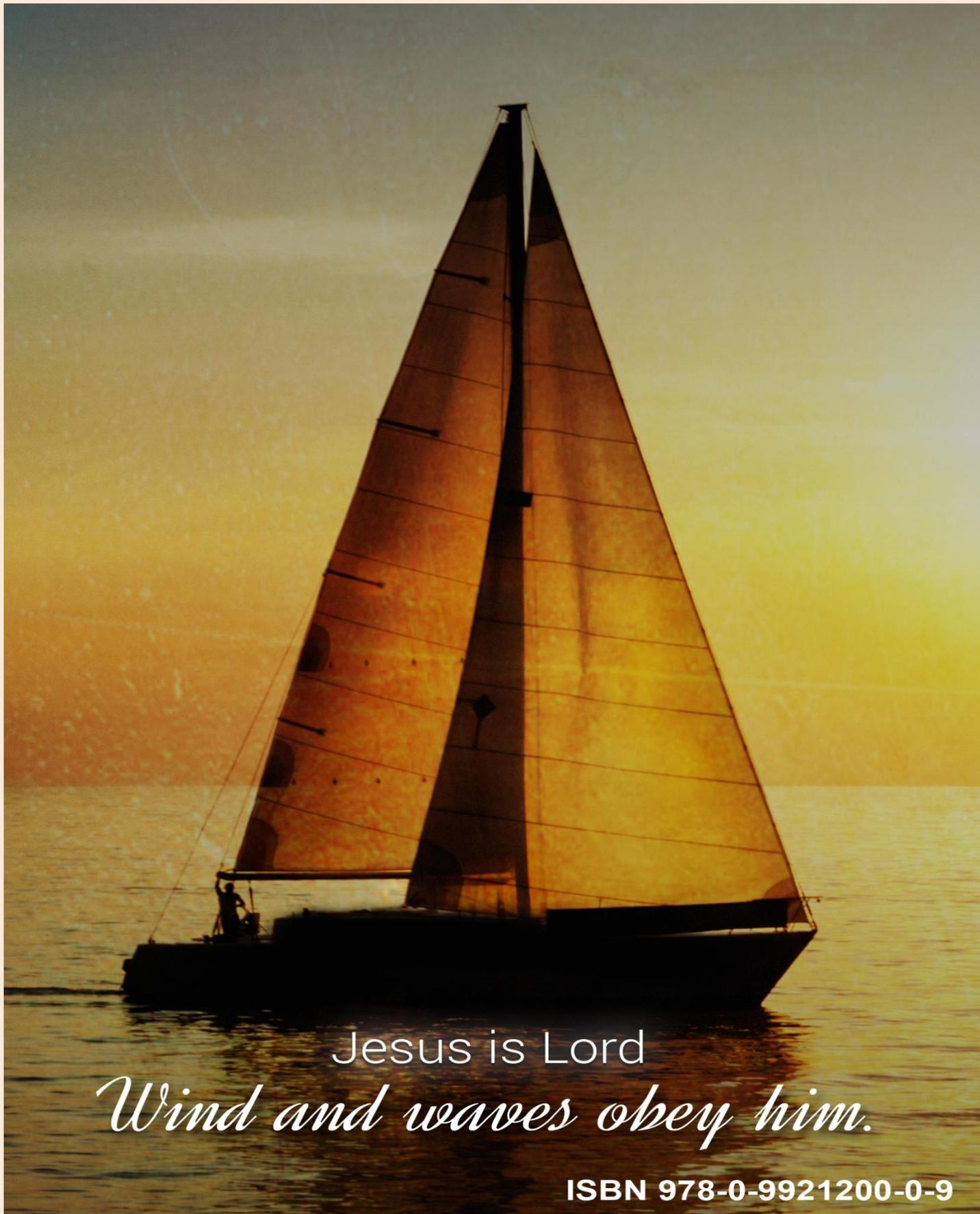
Prayer:

Father God, I pray for my readers and their loved ones and people from all different faiths including Jains that you will touch their hearts and bring them to your knowledge that they may receive your mercy, healing, forgiveness and salvation. Lord, fill them with your Holy Spirit so they will experience your amazing peace, love and joy and glorify your name. Lord, help them grow mature and gain wisdom and prosper them in every walk of their lives. Amen!



Revelation 3:20, 21

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock, If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him, and he with me. 21. To him who overcomes, I will give right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat with my Father on his throne.



Jesus is Lord
Wind and waves obey him.

ISBN 978-0-9921200-0-9