



**“In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer;
I have overcome the world” John 16:33b**

Periodical Message (December 2019)

A Word from us,

The weather was beautiful when we arrived in Erbil, Iraq early morning and we were glad to reach our Mission House and have some rest. An American brother from Columbia, SC was with me and the first thing we did after a short rest is to go out. He was amazed because of the Christmas Decorations everywhere; remember we were in a Muslim country. The amazing thing though is HOW the Lord is using the world's tools to reach out and speak to people. The Christmas Decorations in the West became part of the traditional cultures there, but not where Islam and Islamic Sharia are implemented! Our Jesus though uses such 'foolish things of the world' to open the eyes of thousand to Who He Is; blessed be His holy name. Now you need to join us and pray that the Light of the World would shine, like the Star of Bethlehem, and bring salvation to many...even through a tiny Cross on the door of a Christian.

**Yours in the Lord,
Salman**

A Word according to the Guidance of the Holy Spirit

Righteousness came to the world through CHRISTmas,

In Christmas time we celebrate the Mystery of God; yes, He did NOT forget His creatures, which disobeyed Him and listened to a 'strange voice' and brought destruction upon themselves and their future generation. We remember how He, the loving Father of Spirits, kept His promise and came to fulfil the Word spoken by the prophets that a Messiah will come to save us from our sin. The Angel told Joseph that the 'Son' should be called Jesus--"He shall save His people from their sins"--AND He should be the One to reconcile us to God. The Just died for the unjust; the righteous for the unrighteous...what a mystery, oh what LOVE He has for us!

For me personally, one of the saddest passages in the Bible is Genesis 6; God's judgment of man on earth ten generations since Adam was devastating "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" Ge 6:5.

I want you to imagine with me the Almighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth, looking at humanity and could only find ONE single family which was decent. Can you imagine apart from that one exception, the entire human race was wicked and violent to its core!

Isn't natural that the Lord was sorry; who would not feel the same, especially since He made them in HIS image and they supposed to live eternally like Him?!

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" Ge 6:8 --- THAT verse had a very special touch in my heart. Yes, there was a time when God regretted creating mankind. But the life of ONE righteous man changed God's mind and here begins the fulfilment of God's Plan for mankind--- it is the Mystery of

Christmas. Many celebrate, not knowing the real reason, have no notion about God's Plan and how one day righteousness would reign forever.

The Bible tells us "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth" Rom 10:4 Yes, it is for everyone, for you and for me, the chief of all sinners. God does not differentiate, because He loves every one of us and as a Righteous God, He wants us to be like Him BUT He makes it clear that WE can NOT 'workout' our righteousness. It is GIVEN, a GIFT from the Father through the sacrificial death of His Son Jesus on the Cross. It is the GRACE that changes the equation "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" John 1:17. We must have FAITH in Jesus and what He did in order to receive HIS righteousness "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference..." Rom 3:22. Without Christ, we don't have Christmas; without the Righteous Son, we have no righteousness and are condemn forever.

God's Mystery is never ending, it is amazing "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" Rom 5:18.

I always wondered whether we do really understand what being righteous means; our Lord Jesus told us "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" Matt 5:10. Yes, we will have peace with God, because we are reconciled with Him, but the world, and the 'prince' of this world will not give us, or let us live in peace. We will be persecuted, hated, slandered and even killed; being righteous means you do NOT belong to this evil and unrighteous world anymore. And our Jesus increases the ante by saying "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" Matt 5:20 We have a DIFFERENT righteousness, not 'earned' by works or our 'good deeds and intentions' but RECEIVED by grace through faith in Jesus and HE, the Righteous Son, should be reflected to the world through us. Knowing the Word or preaching it, is NOT enough, otherwise we won't be better than the hypocrites. As Christmas should reflect Christ, also should our life reflect His Righteousness. Now let's listen to Paul the Apostle "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily/devoutly and justly and unblameably/ blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you that believe" 1 Thess 2:10.

It is known that Paul was an effective preacher who could stand boldly before people and testify, "My co-workers and I have lived blameless lives before you and God. Our conduct was righteous and pure. I always walk as if His eyes are on me and you are also witnesses to the way I live." He wanted every believer to have the same power he had in directing people toward God through living a blameless life, in which we lives a NEW Life given by the One, Who is life. But how can anyone, how can I, live blamelessly, and what characterizes such a life?

Brothers, the blameless Christian is one without deceit in his heart and Paul asserted that he was not a fraud, preaching one thing and yet living another; yes indeed, you can NOT reflect Christ and Antichrist at the same time. Paul also warned that certain men were going about claiming to be apostles; as if he was talking about our time, where MANY claim to be 'Servants of the Most High', but their life speaks a different language "For such are false prophets, deceitful workers" 2 Cor 11:13. In essence Paul was saying "You can't fake a blameless walk"

The blameless Christian lives a clean life with good deeds NOT because he does it, but because he is led by the Spirit of the Righteous One "For our exhortation was not of deceit/error, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile..." 1 Thess 2:3. Paul's emphasis here is on sensuality, lust. He is saying, "Nothing unclean came out of my mouth. My conversation was pure, coming forth from a clean heart" Someone whose heart has been cleansed should not tell dirty jokes, make sexual innuendoes or have roving eyes; a Child of the Righteous God would live a righteous life LED by the Spirit and NOT his desires. Christ came to earth to make it as such; the blameless Christian is without guile, which means he is not deceitful or manipulative. There is no hidden agenda with an honest and open believer "For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know...nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ" 1 Thess 2:5-6.

How clear was the Holy Spirit here, and He is the One Who breathed the Scriptures "All scripture is given by inspiration of God..." 2 Tim 3:16. What distinguishes a blameless and righteous walk is a consuming desire to honor the name of Jesus before all men. Such a Christian would rather die than do or say anything that would bring reproach on the Lord. Although he is not perfect, he is pursuing the righteousness of Christ by faith and surrendering all to the Spirit. Oh dear child of God, set your heart to be blameless right now, desire it with everything in you and soon you will discover God's great favor upon

your life. Your words and actions will have an impact on others as you find yourself focused totally on Jesus. And I want you to think about it: if so many members of humanity rejoice at the triumph of righteousness, truth, and love, then how much more does God and His children? Oh servants of Christ, if only we could grasp how much people rejoice over ordinary citizens who practice deeds of kindness and go out of their way to help others, we'd practice them far more frequently and fervently. Therefore, let's cheer the hearts of discouraged men and women of God. Let's make God and all heaven rejoice by helping and serving others. We are encompassed by a host of witnesses who are cheering us on (Hebrews 12:1). Therefore, overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21). Overcome hatred with love (Matthew 5:43-47). Defeat the devil by being more Christ-like. Then you will have a life that's worth living; the Life of Abundance as Christ promised. My prayer for all of you is to surrender to the Righteous One and to let His Righteousness change you and the world around you. I pray that we finally come to the conclusion, that Christ in Christmas is what makes the difference and let's remember what the Angel said "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" Lk 2:11.

Prayer Ideas

- 1.** Join us and pray: Dear Father in heaven, when people and circumstances are against me, please give me the courage and strength to do what is right and fulfill the work You've called me to do. Amen.
- 2.** The world is celebrating its way, not knowing you, Lord Jesus, still we pray for everyone who is celebrating Christmas, without knowing Christ, to have an encounter with YOU Lord. We ask in your holy and precious name that many will get to know you, our Saviour, and that they'll receive Life Eternal through inviting YOU, the Eternal One, in their lives. Make, oh Lord, this time of the year to be a time of Fresh Encounter, as it was with the Shepherds when you were born.
- 3.** Your Presence in our Mission House was felt by many, including Muslims; we pray our Lord that YOU will make the place to a HOLY place to all those know you or want to know you. We ask that miracles and wonders would continue and be the normal pattern of our service; heal oh Lord those who do not know you and open their eyes to Your Presence.
- 4.** We encountered many difficulties while serving you, especially because of that American brother who was with us BUT YOU, Lord Jesus, delivered us from ALL of them. We bless your holy name and thank you for your faithfulness; what a grace...and what a favour you've given us. May you continue putting a hedge around us, protecting and making us invisible to the enemy; for all what you've done we give you honour and glory.
- 5.** Lord, while serving you in Iraq we prayed for many Christians who are under attack; many are suffering from cancer, unbearable pain, diabetics and else. We prayed, oh God Who heals, and claimed healing in Jesus name; bring healing, oh faithful Lord, and confirm the Word we spoken in your name. Let your suffering people know that you are with them, giving, touching and healing.
- 6.** The year has passed by, but you stay with us and we want to thank you for every open door, for every opportunity to pray, to share the Gospel or read from the Bible. We might forget the names or those people Lord, but you won't; please use the prayer, the reading of your word, the preaching of the Gospel and touch those people. May your Holy Spirit reminds them daily of what was done, and may He, the Spirit of Truth, guide them in the whole truth and the knowledge of Christ.
- 7.** We ask for special favour Lord Jesus in that you keep us protected and using us where and when you want; let's be those faithful servants you want to make out of us. Help us to do as you did; guided by the Spirit we should do good, love others as you loved us and give as we received from you. Don't let's be in need to man, because we trust YOU alone to be our Provider.
- 8.** May you be in the centre of our life, our service and everything we say and do; help us to decrease that YOU might increase and may the world around us see MORE of you and less of us.

Finally we encourage you in the name of Jesus to keep the Word, live the Calling and continue serving in a humble heart WITHOUT fear. Don't ever forget your joy in the Lord no matter what might happen---He will never fail you.

We also ask you, dear Saints, to forward our Messages to as many people as you can, whether believers or else with many thanks. We would love to visit you, if invited to your Church, Prayer Group or else and share our testimony with all the Saints or hear from you. Please let's know through an E-mail containing a

phone number to send a message to or even call you back. We will be waiting for your Feedback or commentaries too. What did the Message tell you and what did the Holy Spirit teach you through it? If you want us to pray for you, or for somebody else, please let us know and we will pass the name/s over to our 24/7 Prayer Team-Jesus Highland Prayer House- JHPH.

Have a \\\^I^\\\ Blessed Day

“...I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me” Micah 7:7

Thank you for supporting International Christian Outreach Ministry and standing with us and the persecuted Christians in Iraq.