

# ECHO OF HIS CALL



India's National Spiritual Newspaper

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16 Languages

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Vol. XXXII

YEAR OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, 2025 FEBRUARY

No.02



THE HOLY BIBLE  
Please memorize this portion  
PROVERBS 21:22-31

22. A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.
23. Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.
24. Proud and haughty scion is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.
25. The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.
26. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not.
27. The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?
28. A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.
29. A wicked man hardeneth his face: but as for the upright, he directeth his way.
30. There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.
31. The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.



## RUN TO WIN!

Hon. Editor-in-Chief, Rev. Angeline Selvakumari

It was the 1986 Asian Games and the 800m final in Seoul was about to take place. (Perhaps you weren't even born then.) The entire nation was on the edge of its seat, eagerly anticipating a nail-biting finish by Shiny Abraham, one of India's finest athletes. Expectations soared as people hoped she would secure the gold medal.

When Shiny crossed the finish line first, the pride and joy felt by every Indian were indescribable. Cheers of jubilation echoed from households across the country. However, the euphoria was short-lived. Moments later, it was announced that Shiny had been disqualified for changing lanes too soon.

The nation's collective excitement turned into a heartbreak. Shiny's hard work, determination and relentless effort weren't enough to secure the victory she deserved. It was a devastating blow – not just for

....Contd. to page 3



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## ECHO OF HIS CALL - (1969-2019 GOLDEN JUBILEE YEAR)

*from your dearly beloved brother...*



... "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." - Hebrews 6:14



Dearly beloved in the Lord,

Warm greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

As we enter the New Year 2025, let us give glory to God for His abundant grace and faithfulness. Praise be to His Holy Name!

How are you? I hope this message finds you in good health and steadfast faith. We must remain ever grateful to our Lord Jesus Christ for the countless blessings He has bestowed upon us. This morning, I prayed for your spiritual, physical and emotional well-being.

I feel led to share a devotional message that deeply resonated with me:

### CHASTENING IS NOT PUNISHMENT!

When we continually experience God's deliverance without fully acknowledging or appreciating it, we may become complacent. Pride can subtly creep into our hearts, diminishing our dependence on God and reducing our gratitude. In His love, God may rebuke us to correct and guide us.

When rebuke alone does not bring change, God may allow moments of affliction to humble us and draw us closer to Him. This is the kind of affliction the Psalmist refers to in Psalm 119:75, not as punishment but as a loving correction to prevent us from going astray.

God's character is rooted in love and faithfulness. His faithfulness signifies stability and unwavering commitment. Unlike humans, God does not retaliate with malice; instead, He remains consistent in His love. Do not misinterpret affliction as punishment for disobedience. Punishment is reserved for those estranged from God, while chastening is an act of love for His children who may have momentarily lost their way.

God does not chasten His children out of anger but out of a deep desire to see them grow and flourish. Understanding this helps us accept chastening with a grateful heart and a proper attitude. Joseph is a profound example of someone who embraced affliction with the right perspective (Genesis 50:15-21).

**I know, O Lord, that Your judgments are right, and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me. Psalm 119:75.**

God bless you abundantly!

*Your servants in Christ Jesus,*

**Pr. Alex Samson Sam, Pr. S. Sam Selva Raj**

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We should expound and teach the contemporary generation the undiluted teachings of the ancient and early Apostles. It is the need of the hour.

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- Pr. S. Sam Selva Raj

....*Contd. from page 1*

Shiny but for every Indian who admired and believed in her. Even today, whenever I think of that moment, my heart aches for Shiny, an athlete I deeply respect and admire.



### Run to Win!

Life is a race and God has designed a unique track for each of us. Some are sprinters, others are long-distance runners and some may even be steeplechase athletes, each requiring distinct skills and strategies. We cannot run someone else's race because God has tailored each journey according to His divine plan.

Every type of race demands different levels of stamina, strategy and strength. A sprinter cannot easily transition to long-distance running, nor can a marathoner excel in sprints without immense effort and preparation. Similarly, God equips us with the grace and ability to run the race He has set before us.

Let us run our race with perseverance, focusing not on the finish line of others but on the purpose God has uniquely crafted for us.

If we choose to run a different type of race – whether because it is popular, trendy, or appears to be a safe formula – we miss the essence of our purpose. In doing so, we cannot win the race that truly matters. The ultimate goal

is to stay on the track God has set for us and win the prize He has promised.

If we stray from our designated path and run on someone else's track, even if we finish first, we still lose. The prize will not be ours. This is why the Bible teaches us:

**Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.** 1 Corinthians 9:24 (NIV).

### HOW DO WE RUN THE RACE?



**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.** 2 Timothy 4:7.

To win the prize, we must run faithfully. Faithfulness is essential in every area of our lives – whether in our work, marriage, finances, relationships or spiritual journey.

The race God has called us to run is not a simple sprint; it is a battle. As Paul says, "I have fought the good fight." Each day, we engage in a spiritual battle against the ruler of this world, who is determined to thwart God's purpose for our lives. **His mission is clear: to steal, kill, and destroy** (John 10:10). He seeks to test our faithfulness to our Creator, a strategy he began in the Garden of Eden.

The serpent questioned God's faithfulness, thereby sowing doubt in Eve's mind. This act undermined her trust in God and His command, ultimately destroying her faith. As it is written:

**And the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that on the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."** Genesis 3:4–5.

Through this deception, the serpent stole, destroyed and killed the beautiful relationship Adam and Eve once shared with their Creator.

God calls us to be faithful because He is faithful. Hebrews 10:23 reminds us:

**Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.**

When God makes a promise, He fulfills it. Even when it feels like your prayers remain unanswered for years, know that He has not forgotten you. Psalm 56:8 assures us that God has collected every tear and keeps them in His record. He is always faithful to His people and will answer in His perfect timing.

Therefore, keep running your race, even when you cannot see evidence of His work. Faithfulness to our faithful God requires steadfast faith.

God has already warned us:

**Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will**

suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. - Revelation 2:10

The race we are running is not an easy one – it resembles a steeplechase, filled with various obstacles like water jumps, open ditches and plain fences. Yet, we are called to keep running, steadfast in faith.

If we hold on to our faith despite tribulations and challenges – whether physical, emotional, spiritual, or financial – we will receive the victor's crown. We cannot afford to stop halfway through the race or turn back. Instead, we must persevere with integrity in our hearts and faith in our souls.

Faithfulness in our calling is essential, regardless of our current circumstances. Whatever God has entrusted to us – be it a great responsibility or a small one – we must be faithful. Even in a modest position within a small company, remain faithful. Be faithful when no one is watching, for God sees everything.

Work diligently. As Bible reminds us:

**Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before officials of low rank.** (Proverbs 22:29).

You may not be appreciated at your workplace – stay faithful. You may go unrecognized among your friends or family – stay faithful. You might feel insignificant in the eyes of your church community – stay faithful. God, the ultimate rewarder, sees your labor in secret and will reward you openly in His perfect timing.

A day will come when the Lord will say:

**Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been**

**faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!** (Matthew 25:21)

I pray that God grants us the strength to stand firm in our faith – faithfully and unwaveringly – without compromising, regardless of the challenges we face. May we strive to be true Ambassadors for Jesus Christ.

## 2. RUN WITH ENDURANCE!

**Let us run the race marked out for us with endurance and perseverance.** (Hebrews 12:1).

Perseverance, or endurance, is a crucial quality for any athlete. When the journey becomes difficult, there's no room to give up. Success requires dedication, discipline and a willingness to push oneself beyond comfort. It demands hard work, struggle, sweat, pain and even moments of disappointment.

Similarly, our Christian walk is not an easy path. We encounter struggles, face battles and endure challenges that test our faith. At times, it may feel lonely, as if we are walking a road others don't understand. The inability to align or compromise with worldly values can leave us feeling like the odd one out.

These feelings are natural, but we must remember that this path, though narrow and challenging, leads to eternal joy and fulfillment. Let us press on with unwavering determination, knowing that God is with us every step of the way.

Great men of God experienced similar feelings. Elijah lamented, "... I alone am left; ..." 1 Kings 19:10. David often felt the

weight of loneliness, and Moses, too, endured such moments. These feelings are not new to us. However, **what empowers us to persevere in our race is the testimony of those who have gone before us** (Hebrews 12:1). Their examples remind us that we cannot give up.

Though the journey may feel exhausting, we must press on. Help is always within reach. Some of us may be facing discouraging words, false accusations, misunderstandings, or an inner sense of despair, questioning, "Why should I continue, Lord?" Even so, we are called to run with perseverance.

No one desires isolation; we all long for inclusion. Yet, we must guard our hearts. **When we choose friendship with the world, we risk becoming enemies of God** (James 4:4). The Bible warns that those who align themselves with worldly values are likened to "adulterers and adulteresses."

Therefore, we must remain vigilant in the race God has set before us. There is no room for compromise. Stay steadfast, for the reward is eternal.

## 3) RUN TO FINISH THE RACE!

The ultimate goal of this race is not just to finish but to finish victoriously and claim the prize. As Acts 20:24 says, ... **I consider my life worth nothing to me, If only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me...**

Dear friends, life is fleeting and only what we do for Jesus Christ will endure. As we stand at the beginning of this year, it is time

....Contd. to page 6



# GREAT COMMISSION PARTNERS

TO SHARE (Galatians 6:2)

SUPPORT (Romans 12:13)

SPEED UP (II Timothy 1:6)

PRAISE &amp; PRAYER POINTS - From February 19, 2025 To March 18, 2025

(Please take this sheet out, fold it and keep it in your Bible and pray continuously)



## †PRAISE GOD FOR...

- February 19** ⇒ Blessing our **Media Ministry** and **Echo of His Call** YouTube Channel to reach unreached multilingual people.
- February 20** ⇒ Blessing our Church Ministry to work in a more organised manner.
- February 21** ⇒ The divine protection of our **Nehemiah Bible Colleges** and **St. Paul's Matriculation School** students.
- February 22** ⇒ Blessing us with moral and financial support of our partners.
- February 23** ⇒ His mercy towards our Prayer Partners, Subscribing Partners, Faith Partners, Life Partners and Great Commission Partners and their families.
- February 24** ⇒ Our Senior Pastor for his commitment to propagate the gospel through multifarious ministries.
- February 25** ⇒ Blessing the youth with enthusiasm to participate in all our Church activities.
- February 26** ⇒ Blessing our **Echo of His Call** Associate Editors and their families.
- February 27** ⇒ Protecting our Senior Pastor S. Sam Selva Raj and family from all evil forces.
- February 28** ⇒ The power in God's Word in our Sunday Services at the Main Church and branch Churches.
- March 01** ⇒ Blessing our **St. Paul's Matriculation School**'s Principal, teaching and non-teaching staff.
- March 02** ⇒ His abundant blessings showered upon our workers.
- March 03** ⇒ Blessing our Main Church with mission minded members.

## †PLEASE PRAY FOR ...

- March 04** ⇒ Peace in Israel, Palestine, Russia, and Ukraine.
- March 05** ⇒ All nations' unity and peace.
- March 06** ⇒ Christian Preachers to preach the gospel perfectly without adulteration.
- March 07** ⇒ Admission of deserving students for our Residential and Evening **Nehemiah Bible College** for the academic year 2025-26.
- March 08** ⇒ Admission of new students for our **St. Paul's Matriculation School** for the academic year 2025-26.
- March 09** ⇒ Children and youth of the nations to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.
- March 10** ⇒ Protection of world children and youth from addiction of mobile phone and online games.
- March 11** ⇒ The aged people in the old age homes.
- March 12** ⇒ Our Lord to meet all of our needs this month.
- March 13** ⇒ Good health of our Partners and State Co-ordinators.
- March 14** ⇒ Enabling us to spread gospel into unreached places of India.
- March 15** ⇒ Abundant mercies in this New Year 2025.
- March 16** ⇒ The safety of our Senior Pastor S. Sam Selva Raj and his family members from all sort of evil forces.
- March 17** ⇒ The safety of all women and children in the world.
- March 18** ⇒ The health of our staff members.

....Contd. from page 4

for self-reflection. Are you running the race God has set before you? Are you on the right track? Are you giving your all, running with perseverance despite the distractions, setbacks and challenges that seek to hold you back? If not, this is the perfect moment to recommit.

Let us run faithfully, with endurance and with the determination to finish strong. Do not give up! God is faithful. He will never lead us to a place where His grace is insufficient.

If the burden you carry feels overwhelming, too heavy, or emotionally draining, come before God and pour out your heart to Him. Say, "Lord, I am struggling in this area. I cannot continue to run with this weight on my shoulders."

Consider the example of King Hezekiah. When he heard the words of the Assyrian king, his heart was torn apart. He felt utterly helpless. The Assyrian king mocked him and his faith, saying, "How dare you stand against me? What confidence do you have? Who will save you from my hand? It's over. No one can deliver you. If you like, I'll even give you 2,000 horses – if you can find riders for them – to fight against me!"

What a challenge! Imagine the mental and emotional state of

King Hezekiah in that moment. Yet, in his despair, Hezekiah turned to God, his true source of strength.

What Would You Do in This Situation? The Assyrian kings were infamous for their brutal treatment of captives, particularly rival kings. Knowing this, Hezekiah understood that his future seemed bleak. He could have abandoned his faith and failed to complete the race set before him. However, Isaiah 37 reveals a different response:

1. He turned to the presence of the Lord – Hezekiah went into the temple and humbled himself before God.

2. He shared his troubles with God – He poured out his heart and sought divine guidance. As David writes in Psalm 119:26, **I have declared my ways, and You answered me; teach me Your statutes.** Another translation renders it, "I told You all about my life." Likewise, we are encouraged to bring our problems, failures and disappointments to God. When we do, He will teach us the way forward.



Dear men and women of God, are you weary of staying

faithful in your ministry? Are you struggling to persevere? Don't give up! Now is not the time to quit. Rise up and keep running until He tells you to stop!

No matter what challenges we face, let us run with endurance.

## How Not to Run?

Don't Run in Vain: Paul writes in Galatians 2:2, ... **Lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.**

We must be careful to run the race God has set before us and not waste our efforts. Consider the lesson from the world-class athlete Shiny Abraham. Though she finished her race first, she missed the medal because of a small, seemingly innocent mistake.

Sometimes, we may be hardworking, dedicated and faithful, yet still fail to win the prize. Why? Because we may overlook what God truly wants from us. We might miss understanding the specific race He has designed for us to run.

Let us take the time to seek His will, discern His purpose and download the message He has uniquely prepared for our lives. Only then can we run with purpose and finish the race victoriously.

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15. **Tamil Service** : **8.30 a.m. Sunday**
16. **Youth Meeting** : **11.00 a.m. Sunday**
17. **Fellowship Lunch** : **1.00 p.m. Sunday**
18. **Hindi Service** : **4.00 p.m. Sunday**
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# PIT TO PALACE

(Life experiences of Pastor S. Sam Selva Raj)

**“Whoever reads, let him understand” (Matthew 24:15)**



**NO WEAPON FORMED AGAINST YOU SHALL PROSPER, AND EVERY TONGUE WHICH RISES AGAINST YOU IN JUDGMENT YOU SHALL CONDEMN... ISAIAH 54: 17.**

Most of the time, whenever we had started a new ministry for the expansion of the Kingdom of God, we had to face various types of oppositions and difficulties. Sometimes, troubles came from devil directly and sometimes troubles came through people. On several occasions, I had to face difficulties and oppositions as a single person.

When we were constructing the main mission building, people who were living in the locality were highly unhappy. They had tried to give the maximum troubles to me when the construction was in progress. The workers who were involved were also disturbed heavily and because of the torture given by certain people, most of the workers left the job and I found it very difficult to proceed further. On seeing the tremendous oppositions, the building contractor who was a Christian also had taken back his workers and ran away from the scene.

Some people who were against the works of the Lord approached me very gently and asked me to stop the work of the Lord in that particular place and asked to move to another Christian locality and they offered to give me any amount of money for that. I was very stubborn in my calling and told them humbly that I could not hear their voices and explained them that it was the work of the Living God and requested them not to stand against the work in any way.

But they continued to give me mental and physical strain. During this time of trial, I approached various Christian leaders in the city and Christian advocates to join hands with me. Unfortunately nobody came to my rescue. But I spent much time in prayer asking the Lord to be with me. I also found peace in proceeding further by faith.

For example, one day, the concrete flooring work had started and the readily mixed concrete trucks came and the work started. Some neighbours

joined against me and started shouting against the work. I didn't know what to do and I had to send back the mixed concrete trucks to the concerned company, but by paying the cost of it. But after few days God helped me to complete the work.

Finally, after the entire work was over, I started sending invitation letters to my friends and well-wishers, requesting them to attend the Dedication Service of the building. By that time, all the people who stood against me and the work of the Lord had disappeared. Some of them had to leave the locality due to family problems; some of them had sold out their property and went away; and so many sad things happened in the lives of the people who stood against the work of the Lord. But the saddest thing was that I was unable to trace out their whereabouts or their families when I searched for them to give invitations to attend our Dedication Service. Some of the buildings are kept locked even now and nobody is living there for a long time. Some buildings were demolished and nobody is there.

Now there is none to stand against the work of the Lord. Our premises is the busiest one in the locality. People worship the Lord liberally. A lot of activities are going on day and night for the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Bible Says:

**The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.** Deuteronomy 28: 7. **You shall seek them - and not find them those who contended with you. Those who war against you shall be as nothing, as a nonexistent thing.** Isaiah 41:12.

Dear friend, are you undergoing great calamities and disturbances in your life even though you try to do good work? Be patient and look unto the face of God. Even if you have lost everything in your life, the future is still remaining.

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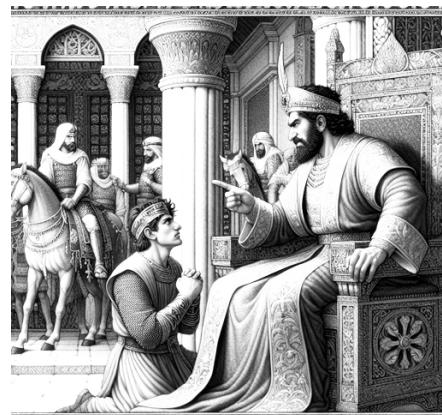
....Contd. from page 6

In 2 Samuel 18, we encounter a fascinating incident. Joab was fighting King David's battle against his son Absalom. Despite the conflict, David had explicitly commanded that no harm should come to Absalom. However, during the battle, Joab secured victory, but Absalom was killed. This tragic news needed to be delivered to David – a task requiring utmost sensitivity.

Two runners volunteered to carry the message to David. Joab, however, instructed Ahimaaz not to take the message that day, suggesting he could run another time. Instead, Joab chose a Cushite messenger and directed him to report what he had witnessed. The Cushite began running, but Ahimaaz, insistent on joining, eventually convinced Joab to let him run as well. Being the faster runner, Ahimaaz overtook the Cushite and reached King David first.

David, waiting with great anticipation, eagerly asked Ahimaaz about the outcome of the battle. However, Ahimaaz, despite his speed and effort, admitted he did not know the full details: ... I saw a great confusion ... but I don't know what it was. 2 Samuel 18:29. He had no meaningful message to deliver, even though he had run tirelessly, with great dedication and perseverance.

In contrast, the Cushite, though slower, fulfilled his



*The Cushite tactfully informed David of Absalom's death.*

responsibility as a messenger. When he arrived, he conveyed the message with clarity and sensitivity. In response to David's question, the Cushite said, ... May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up to harm you be like that young man. 2 Samuel 18:32. Without directly stating it, the Cushite tactfully informed David of Absalom's death.

The comparison between Ahimaaz and the Cushite is striking. Ahimaaz was a better runner but a poor messenger because he lacked the most critical element – a message. A messenger's first responsibility is to deliver the correct message, no matter how eloquently it is presented.

As we reflect on this passage, let us heed its lesson: Do not run like Ahimaaz!

My dear brothers and sisters, as we begin this year, let us run not just with speed and effort but with purpose and clarity. Let us Run to Win!

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