

Hermon Marthoma Church

MIDLANDS

June 2008

www.marthomamidlands.co.uk

Volume 2, Issue 2



Next Service:

**14 June 08 (Holy Communion)
4pm to 6pm**

**28 June 08 (Holy Communion)
4pm to 6pm**

At

**St. James Hill Church
Mere Green Road
Four Oaks, West Midlands
B75 5DD**

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Reminder to all

Special offertory

June: Clergy Medical Aid

July: Tithing

From Achen's desk

Greetings

In today's world, the drastic changes in global weather conditions, the increase in all forms of pollution, the huge amounts of waste produced each year, deforestation, and many other problems has made the environment a major concern for people all over the world. The theme of our church lectionary for the first Sunday of June is "Environment Sunday- Integrity of Creation." This is a time for us to focus our attention on how we are treating this planet.

Too often, we have an incorrect understanding of the bible. It is commonly believed by many people that God created the world for the benefit of people. In 1967 UCLA History Professor Lynn White, Jr., who wrote an article entitled, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" (*Science* 155(3767):1203-1207, 1967). In this article, he said that the Western world's attitudes towards nature were shaped by the Judeo-Christian tradition. White wrote that Christianity, and Western civilization as a whole, held a view of nature that separated humans from the rest of the natural world, and encouraged exploitation of it for our own ends. This tradition, White wrote, involved the concept of a world created solely for the benefit of man: "God planned all [of creation] explicitly for man's benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purposes."

But this is not a correct understanding of the bible. Mainstream Judaism did not interpret the creation story as a divine carte blanche to exploit nature without remorse. Nine hundred years ago, Rashi, the most distinguished commentator on the Torah, noted that the Hebrew word for "take dominion" (v'yirdu) comes from the same root as "to descend" (yarad). Thus, he declares: "When humanity is worthy, we have dominion over the animal kingdom; when we are not, we descend below the level of animals and the animals rule over us." We are preeminent only when we act in keeping with the highest standards of responsibility. Abusing the rest of the creation is a sign of debasement rather than dominion.

The following is from the Declaration on the Environment which was signed by Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople on June 10, 2002:

"At the beginning of history, man and woman sinned by disobeying God and rejecting His design for creation. Among the results of this first sin was the destruction of the original

harmony of creation. If we examine carefully the social and environmental crisis which the world community is facing, we must conclude that we are still betraying the mandate God has given us: to be stewards called to collaborate with God in watching over creation in holiness and wisdom."

After God created the garden of Eden, God "took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till and keep it.(Genesis 2:15)" **God has not abandoned the world. It is God's will that His design for creation will be realized through our cooperation in restoring creations original harmony.**

Too often as Christians we fail in our responsibility to take care of creation. The following is from The Hindu website, regarding this year's Maramon Convention:

"Addressing the inaugural session, both Mar Thoma Metropolitan Joseph Mar Thoma and senior Metropolitan Philipose Mar Chrysostum stressed the need to protect the environment for the sustenance of life.

Inaugurating the annual convention, Joseph Mar Thoma said the spirit of sharing, rooted in divine love and compassion, was the prime requisite for a healthy society. He said the Church had always given due importance to green ecumenism and had taken certain steps to check pollution on the Pampa riverbed.

He said there were also media reports on the badly littered riverbed after the previous year's Maramon Convention. Certain government officials had also taken notice of the issue and submitted a report on the same. The Mar Thoma Metropolitan called upon the faithful to keep the Maramon riverbed clean, taking environment protection as a divine mission."

Despite hearing many times about how important the environment is, we often fail to properly keep it. As the Christians in India who attend the Maramon convention last year did not properly take care of the convention site, we too do not properly take care of our own places of worship. There are others who are watching what we as Christians do. We should set an example of being environmentally concerned.

God created the world and it still belongs to Him, but He wants us to be "a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. (Exodus 19:5-6)" As our Metropolitan said, protecting the environment is a divine mission. We as Christians should do our part to reduce the amount of pollution that is generated each year. Even small changes can have major impacts. The world is a gift from God to us, it is our Christian responsibility to make sure that it is well cared for.

Not only for God, but also for our children.

Rev. Shibi Abraham

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UK Parish News

Churches Together in England (CTE) is an ecumenical organisation and national Christian church council in England.

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to tell you that our application for the membership of 'Churches Together In England- CTE' has gone through all the necessary stages and has been accepted by thirty member churches unanimously.

Now we have certain privileges and rights, which we did not have before. From today we are a bona-fide Christian Church equal in status with other member churches. All our Achens and the members of the committee that Thirumeni nominated for this specific purpose played their part quite well. It was a dream of mine for several years to make our Church part of the English establishment for legitimate reasons. Until today we were mostly here under the pretence of our relationship with Church of England and the Anglican Communion. Now our status is different, we have a legal status.

A very special thanks is due to Mathew Punnoose Achen for the trouble and criticisms that he suffered for his enthusiasm, I enjoyed working with him as a co-convenor of the committee.

It is only a beginning, all our Achens can be very proud that it has happened during their keep and ministry in England. Thirty churches and their members will be looking to our Achens and our members to bring our gifts and talents to members of other churches in England. We are no more a Pampa River basin-based church; this is another step in establishing our place as a world-wide church.

I should be grateful if you could kindly inform this to our members and highlight its importance.

With kind regards,

Dr. Zac Varghese

Thanks Zac for informing us all. I would like to show my appreciation to all the committee members who took time to attend meetings and those who could not come but supported from where ever they were.

I would like to Thank Coorilos Tirumeni for all his support and leg work. Our Metropolitan and Valia Tirumeni also deserve thanking. All our Achens played significant role and will be playing ever more significant role from now on in shaping our future here. Let us pray to God that we will be guided by His will and He will show us the right path to move forward. This is definitely a milestone in our history which would open several more new avenues to share and grow together in this country.

May God bless us all!

Lilly



Tithes & offering

Malachi 3:7-11

Introduction:

Surely this is one of the most unusual texts found in the Bible. But within this unusual text, there are two important truths to help you to grow. The first unusual truth you discover is that Malachi charges that a man can rob God. For one to keep back that which God has declared to be His is robbing God. The second important truth you discover is God's plan for giving. It is essential that you learn to give biblically if you are to grow spiritually.

There are three things you need to know about scriptural giving. As you begin to apply these truths concerning giving, you will discover that a man cannot out give God. The more you give to God, the more He will bless you in return.

I. Problems of Giving

The first thing you learn from Malachi is the problem of giving. The problem is that many people are reluctant to give scripturally. Some say they do not have to give the tithe because they are not under the law. Yet, the first mention of the tithe being given was before the law was instituted. These individuals misunderstand the reason for giving. It is not the law that motivates the Christian to give, but rather it is love!

There are actually two problems which hinder God's people from giving.

A. Financial Problem

Some people claim they cannot afford to tithe. This is the most common problem which hinders scriptural giving. Many have unwisely spent and have incurred debt beyond what they can reasonably pay. The truth is you cannot afford to fail to tithe. Financial giving to God along with biblical principles of finance is the road back to financial well-being. The most basic principle to financial recovery is to honour God with your tithe first!

B. Faith Problem

This passage from Malachi, along with others, encourages and exhorts you to give. It is not the lack of finances which keep one from tithing, but rather it is the lack of faith. Failure to tithe is a failure of your faith.

II. Proportion of Giving

The Bible clearly teaches that a Christian should give to support the work of God on earth. But people often ask, "How much should I give?" This question refers to the proportion of giving.

From Malachi, you discover two things about proportionate giving.

A. Obligation

The first thing you learn about proportionate giving is about your obligation to give. Malachi makes it clear that the Believer has an obligation to give back unto God a portion of what God has blessed him with. The Christian is obligated to give the tithe or ten percent of his income. The least proportion that the Bible teaches a Christian should give is ten percent. In Acts, many early Christians sold all they had and gave one hundred percent of what they made to the Lord's work.

Most of us are better able to give the Old Testament tithe (ten percent) than the New Testament totality (one hundred percent). You have met your scriptural obligation when you give ten percent of your income. Another question which often arises is whether Christians should give ten percent of their gross income (before deductions) or ten percent of their net income (after deductions). The right answer for the wage earner is to give ten percent before deductions or ten percent of your gross income. Would you like to receive God's gross blessings or His net blessing? Surely you would want to receive the full blessings of God that are available to you!

B. Offering

The second thing you learn about proportionate giving is about the offering. An offering is considered to be the amount given above the tithe. The tithe is an obligation to give; the offering is an opportunity to give. Luke instructs us concerning giving, saying, "**Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again**" (Luke 6:38). How exciting it is to give and to see that God keeps promises such as this one in Luke! Allow the Spirit of God to impress on your heart to whom, when, and how much to give as an offering.

III. Promise of Giving

Within the text in Malachi, you find two promises of giving for those who are faithful to honour God with their tithes and offerings.

A. Promise of Provision

The first promise of giving is that of provision. Malachi wrote of the promise of provision saying, "**prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it**" (Malachi 3:10b). God has promised an abundant blessing for those who trust Him by giving their tithes and their offerings. Will you not prove God?

B. Promise of Protection

Another important promise of this text is that of protection. Malachi wrote, "**And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts**" (Malachi 3:11).

Someone has wisely said, "You will either give your tithe to God or end up giving it to the doctor or the mechanic. God always gets His tithe!" The choice as to whom you give your tithes is yours.

Failure to honour God with your tithes and offerings will be a hindrance to your spiritual growth. So give that you might grow!

RIGHT GIVING IS A PART OF RIGHT LIVING. THE LIVING IS NOT RIGHT WHEN THE GIVING IS WRONG. THE GIVING IS WRONG WHEN WE STEAL GOD'S PORTION TO SPEND ON OURSELVES.

Source – The internet



Special Greetings this month

Birthday greetings to

Annie John (Sunitha), Shaji Thomas, Anup V Mathew, and Neena Mathews

Congratulations on the Wedding Anniversaries of

Sunny Thomas & Elizabeth Thomas

Sunday school

At 3:30pm every 2nd and 4th Saturdays at the Church.



Useful contacts

Rev: Shibi Abraham:
07943818819
01612232199

Dr Sunny Thomas
0121 308 1200

Mr V V Abraham
0773 721 6172
0247 632 7334

Dr Simon Idiculla
01902 380 363

Sevika Sangam
Marykutty Thomas
0121 772 8697

Sunday school
Susan Abraham
0247 632 7334

Other announcements

Forthcoming Events:

Choir Dedication Day	:	To Be Advised
Hermon Mar Thoma Church	:	
First Anniversary Celebrations	:	JULY
Elections of new office Bearers	:	To Be Advised
Annual Conference	:	AUGUST
Vacation Bible School for Kids	:	AUGUST
Sevika sangam day	:	SEPTEMBER
Convention	:	To Be Advised
Harvest Festival	:	OCTOBER
Sunday school Dedication Day	:	NOVEMBER
Christmas Carol Service	:	DECEMBER

Changes to the above will be made based on availability of the Church Hall & holidays

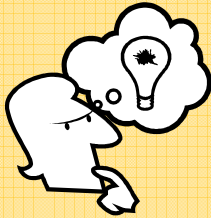
Message from Secretary

Please get in touch with our members in your area and offer support in their times of need if required. Contact details can be obtained from the committee members.

Also please attend the service and contribute generously to the causes supported by each of the above events.

Finally, if you wish to contribute towards the refreshments after the service, please let me know. There are no bookings so far.

Biji (V V Abraham)



“The woodpecker will have to go”, says Noah. But where to?