



**BETHEL BIBLE COLLEGE  
GUNTUR**



**Ebenezer**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Bethel Bible College is a vision pursued, a venture of faith, with the mission of equipping young men and women to share the Gospel, plant new churches, and provide pastoral and other services to the church and society. The College, its faculty, Board of Directors, and supporters are interdenominational and ecumenical in orientation, united by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and rooted in the Bible.

Soli Deo gloria!

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## COVER STORY

- J. S. HOSANNA ARASU

Every person's life unfolds in a different way. Life is always beyond human prediction. On one side, there are roaring, aggressive waves. On the other, there are gentle, beautiful waves that come and softly touch our feet.

The colors of life, at times, appear vibrant and multicolored like the natural hues that emerge on a caterpillar's body, or like the variety of flowers in a blooming garden, each with its own color and fragrance. Yet, at certain times, life can also become harsh and cruel, like a dry, thorny wilderness plant that has withered without water.

Amidst all these, we continue our journey of life. Though our emotions are ever-changing, shifting between joy and sorrow but we do not hesitate to move forward. With hope, we continue our journey toward the future.

Just as the people of Israel, in their journey toward Canaan, faced many problems and obstacles, the Lord safely guided them. When they crossed the Red Sea and the Jordan, He made a path for those who did not know the way, gave them strength in their struggles, and opened the way before them.

The footprints seen in this image are not those of a man,  
but of the Ebenezer who guides and carries us in His arms.

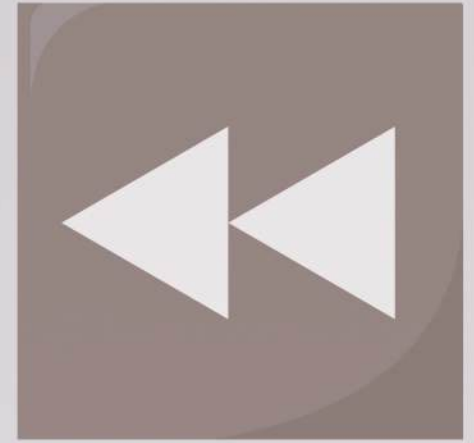
As written in Psalm 37:23-24, the Lord delights in our way. He makes our steps firm. Even if we stumble, we will not fall, because Ebenezer is with us and He will act on our behalf and uphold us with His hand.



**IN REMEMBRANCE OF  
REV. DR. P. N. S. CHANDRA BOSE**

**FOUNDER PRESIDENT OF  
BETHEL BIBLE COLLEGE**

# Rewinding the Past...



## People:

**"Why do you want to start a theological college in a remote slum, and how can you expect students from all over the country to come and study in a slum? And how can you expect the Professors to come and teach in a slum?"**

## Rev. Dr. P.N.S. Chandra Bose:

**"Don't you know the King of kings and Lord of lords Jesus Christ was born in a manger? And don't you know the whole plan of God's salvation for the mankind started functioning from a manger?" If it is true, I asked them "why not a theological college in a slum can serve the needs of the students who want to study theology in a more befitting way?"**

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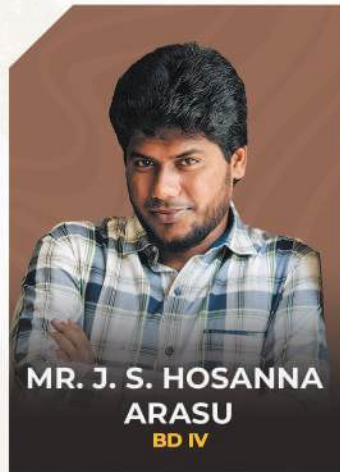
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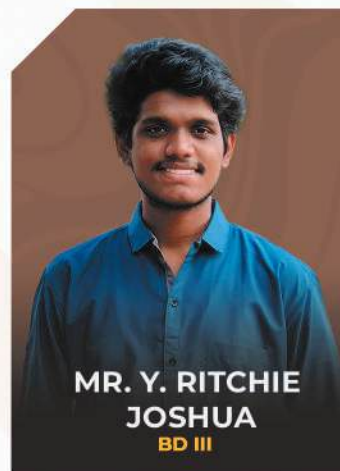
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# MAGAZINE COMMITTEE



## DESIGNERS





## FROM THE *Editor's Desk*

It is with gratitude to God that I present the 4th edition of our annual magazine, Aleph. Each year, in addition to generating resourceful themes from the faculty and students, we work extensively to report on the life and events in our college. Thus, this magazine reflects the diversity inherent in the academic and extracurricular spaces of BBC.

The journey of Aleph has been an immense pleasure. For the past three years, Aleph has driven its readers toward the joy of reading and continues to carry forward its legacy. With the same spirit, Aleph 2026 is ready to inspire its readers with the theme “Ebenezer,” which reflects God’s faithfulness in the life of BBC over the past 25 years.

In I Samuel, the Israelites experienced defeat, fear, and uncertainty. Yet, when they turned back to God with sincerity, He answered them, fought for them, and restored them. Samuel’s act of raising the Ebenezer stone marked a transition from despair to hope, from defeat to victory, and from self-reliance to dependence on God. It declared that their past struggles were not in vain, for God had been present through it all. The Ebenezer stone stood as a visible reminder that every victory, every deliverance, and every step forward was possible only because of God’s sustaining grace.

This same spirit of Ebenezer becomes deeply meaningful when we reflect on 25 years of our college journey. BBC is not merely an institution of learning; it is a living testimony of vision, perseverance, challenges, and growth.

Over the span of 25 years, there have been seasons of humble beginnings, financial constraints, academic hurdles, and moments of uncertainty. Yet, through each phase, God’s faithfulness has been evident in raising leaders, shaping students, providing resources, and opening doors at the right time.

The stone that Samuel raised was not only a reminder of what God had done but also a declaration that He will continue to lead His people. As we celebrate 25 years of the college, we are not only looking back with gratitude but also looking forward with confidence.

Thus, “Ebenezer” is not just a title; it is the testimony of BBC. It is a call to trust God for the future. The same God who was faithful in the past remains unchanging. Therefore, as we mark this significant milestone, let us raise our own Ebenezer, not of stone, but of thanksgiving, faith, and renewed commitment. My prayer is that as we read this magazine, it will remind us that every success is rooted in God’s grace, every challenge is an opportunity for His power to be revealed, and every future step is secure in His hands.

“Thus far the Lord has helped us.”

May this truth continue to guide our college and every aspect of our lives in the years to come.

Yours in His Service,  
K. Keziah Glory  
Faculty In-charge

# GREETINGS FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF BSI

It is with profound joy and heartfelt gratitude to God that I extend my warm greetings to the Bethel Bible College family on the momentous occasion of celebrating 25 years of God's sustaining grace and faithfulness. The theme "Ebenezer" — "Thus far the Lord has helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12) — beautifully captures the spiritual journey of this institution, reminding us that every milestone achieved stands as a testimony to the Lord's unfailing guidance.

On this significant occasion, let us gratefully reflect on the humble yet profound vision of Dr. P. N. S. Chandra Bose, the Founder President of Bethel Bible College. During a visit with Rev. Dr. Scott Norling to Trinity Theological College in St. Paul's, Minnesota, God placed a clear and compelling calling upon his heart—to establish a Bible College in Guntur. He discerned it as God's perfect timing, igniting within him a deep passion to provide sound theological training for young men and women in India, equipping them for faithful service to the Lord. Today, we witness the fulfillment of that vision.

Over the past quarter century, Bethel Bible College has been a beacon of theological excellence, shaping men and women for faithful ministry and committed discipleship. What began as a vision rooted in obedience to God has now flourished into a vibrant center of learning, impacting countless lives across regions and generations.

This journey has not merely been marked by academic accomplishments, but by transformed lives, deepened faith, and a steadfast commitment to the Word of God.

The remembrance of "Ebenezer" calls us not only to look back with thanksgiving but also to move forward with renewed confidence. The same God who has led the College through seasons of growth, challenges, and opportunities will continue to guide it into greater realms of service. As we reflect on His faithfulness, we are encouraged to remain steadfast in our calling, unwavering in our mission, and united in our vision for the Kingdom of God.

I commend the leadership, faculty, alumni, and students of Bethel Bible College for their dedication and perseverance. Your collective efforts have built a legacy that honors God and serves His Church. May this Silver Jubilee celebration inspire a deeper commitment to theological integrity, spiritual formation, and missional engagement.

As you bring out this souvenir magazine, may it stand as a lasting record of God's faithfulness and a source of encouragement for future generations. May the Lord continue to bless Bethel Bible College abundantly, strengthening it to be a lighthouse of truth and hope in the years to come.

With prayerful blessings and sincere congratulations,

Rev. Dr. P. Leela Chandra Bose  
Senior Pastor, Jehovah Shalome Church  
National President, The Bible Society of India



# GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF BBC

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

I am truly delighted in the Lord to congratulate and extend my heartfelt greetings to the Principal, staff, and students of Bethel Bible College for your diligent efforts in bringing out yet another edition of the College magazine, centered on the meaningful theme, “Ebenezer.”

As we reflect on this profound theme, we are reminded of the words in 1 Samuel 7:12: “Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us.’” This powerful testimony stands as a reminder of God’s unfailing faithfulness throughout our journey both individually and as a community of faith.

It is especially significant that this edition comes at a time when the College is celebrating its 25 years of God’s faithfulness—its Silver Jubilee. This milestone stands as a living “Ebenezer,” a testimony that through every challenge, growth, and achievement, the Lord has been your help. Over these years, Bethel Bible College has been a beacon of spiritual formation, raising leaders and servants for His Kingdom. Truly, as we look back with gratitude, we can declare with confidence, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.”

The concept of “Ebenezer” is more than a historical marker; it is a living declaration of God’s sustaining grace in our lives. It calls us to remember His goodness in times of trial, His provision in moments of need, and His guidance through every season. It encourages us to pause and acknowledge that every step we have taken thus far has been by His divine help.

Allow me to share a personal reflection that highlights the significance of this truth. Following the passing of my beloved father, Rev. Dr. P. N. S. Chandra Bose, Founder President of

Gospel Mission of India, in 2021, I faced immense challenges as I stepped into the responsibilities of ministry. Yet, in every difficulty, I experienced the Lord’s faithful hand guiding me. Each obstacle became an opportunity to witness His grace at work. Today, as I continue in this calling, I can confidently say, “Thus far the Lord has helped me.” This assurance not only strengthened my personal faith but also enabled me to encourage and uplift the church through messages of hope and healing.

As you engage with this magazine, I encourage each one of you to reflect on your own “Ebenezer” moments. Take time to remember and celebrate the ways in which God has been faithful in your life. Let this theme inspire you to trust Him for the future, knowing that the One who has helped you thus far will continue to lead you forward.

In Christ’s unfailing love,

Rev. P. Jeevan Sylvanus Bose,  
General Secretary, Gospel Mission of India,  
President, Bethel Bible College,



# GREETINGS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Warm greetings to all!

It is with great joy that I extend my heartfelt wishes to the readers, contributors, and editorial team of Aleph Magazine as we present this special edition centered on the theme “Ebenezer” drawn from the biblical narrative in 1 Samuel 7:12, where the prophet Samuel declared, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.”

Ebenezer stands as a powerful testimony of God’s enduring faithfulness and guidance in our lives. Each “Ebenezer” we raise in our hearts becomes a marker of remembrance, reminding us that our journey of faith is never walked alone.

The word Ebenezer beautifully reminds us to pause and reflect on God’s unfailing faithfulness in our journey. As an institution, we look back with gratitude for His guidance, strength, and abundant blessings that have sustained us through every challenge and milestone. Indeed, it is by His grace that we stand where we are today.

From its humble beginnings, the hand of God has been clearly evident. The college was established with a vision to equip young men and women for faithful Christian ministry. In its early days, resources were limited, challenges were many, and the path ahead often seemed uncertain. Yet, God proved Himself as Ebenezer, providing the necessary support through committed leaders, sacrificial faculty, and generous well-wishers who believed in the mission.

4 Throughout these years, God’s hand has been evident in sustaining the institution academically and spiritually. The college has grown not only in infrastructure but also in its depth of theological training and spiritual formation.

In times of difficulties, whether financial constraints, administrative challenges, or societal changes, and even the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, God has remained faithful. Doors were opened at the right time, needs were met in unexpected ways, and strength was renewed for those entrusted with leadership. Each challenge became an opportunity to witness God’s provision more clearly.

The past twenty-five years also testify God’s guidance in shaping the college’s vision. It has remained committed to biblical truth, holistic ministry training, and nurturing a heart for service. Seasons of growth, renewal, and adaptation have all pointed to one truth: the Lord has been the foundation and sustainer of Bethel Bible College.

As the college looks to the future, the Ebenezer stands not merely as a remembrance of past help, but as a promise of continued divine guidance. The same God who has led thus far will lead onward—into new opportunities, greater impact, and deeper faithfulness.

With grateful hearts, we raise this Ebenezer, proclaiming that every achievement, every life transformed, and every milestone reached has been by God’s grace alone.

In the year 2000, God raised His servant, Rev. Dr. Perumalapalli Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, a well-known visionary among the people from Andhra Pradesh, and placed within his heart a divine vision to establish Bethel Bible College. What began as a step of faith, often accompanied by uncertainties and limitations, soon became a living testimony of God’s sustaining grace. With a burden to equip and prepare young men and women for ministry, Rev. Dr. P N S Chandra Bose obediently responded to God’s call, trusting Him as the ultimate provider and guide.



Under the visionary leadership and sacrificial commitment of Rev. Dr. P N S Chandra Bose, Committed Faculty Members and Non-Teaching Staff, Prayer Partners, the institution has grown steadily, shaping countless lives for the service of God's Kingdom. Students trained within these walls have gone forth as pastors, missionaries, and leaders, carrying the light of the Gospel to various regions in India and beyond. Each life transformed stands as a living "Ebenezer," declaring God's continued work through this institution. Thus far, the Bethel Bible College has sent out more than 1000 young men and women into the vineyard of Jesus over these twenty five years. The journey has not been without trials, yet in every season, God has led the college forward. His guidance has been evident in every decision, His provision seen in every need met, and His presence felt in every achievement. Truly, Bethel Bible College stands today not merely as an institution, but as a monument of God's faithfulness.

As we look back with gratitude, we also look forward with faith. The same God who inspired the vision in 2000 and sustained it through the years will continue to lead into the future. With hearts full of thanksgiving, we raise our Ebenezer, proclaiming that "thus far the Lord has helped us," and trusting Him for all that lies ahead.

This magazine serves not only as a collection of theological insights but also as a spiritual milestone, encouraging deeper reflection, renewed commitment, and a strengthened trust in God's providence.

I appreciate the sincere efforts of the editorial team and all contributors who have worked diligently to bring out this meaningful publication. May this magazine continue to enlighten minds, nurture values, and strengthen faith.

Wishing you all God's continued blessings.

To God be all the glory.

Rev. Dr. P. A. Seth  
Principal

“

**EACH "EBENEZER" WE RAISE IN OUR HEARTS  
BECOMES A MARKER OF REMEMBRANCE,  
REMINING US THAT OUR JOURNEY OF  
FAITH IS NEVER WALKED ALONE.**

”



Church of South India  
**DIOCESE OF TIRUNELVELI**



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19.01.2026

**MESSAGE OF GREETINGS**

I am glad to know that Bethel Bible College is crossing the mile stone of 25<sup>th</sup> year of its meritorious services to the Church and the larger community in this region by training Christian Leaders to be the instruments for the extension of His kingdom.

Indeed, it is a time to look back and count the manifold blessing that the Lord has been showering upon this institution, which have enabled the college to equip so far, more than 500 B.D. graduates and 300 distance education students to serve in the God's vineyard throughout the globe.

The Silver Jubilee year is not only an occasion of praising God for the past blessings; but also an occasion of rededication and total submission to fulfill the purpose for which the Lord has called all the members of faculty as well as members of managing body.

I wish and pray that the Management, staff and students of Bethel Bible College will continue to discover God's presence in this context of 25 years of long journey of hope.

As prophet Isaiah says, let this college grow from strength to strength in the years to come. *'Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes'* (Is 54 : 2).

With prayers and blessings,

**Rt. Rev. Dr. ARGST. Barnabas**  
Bishop in Tirunelveli



# FACULTY MEMBERS

## OLD TESTAMENT



REV. CHITTI BABU CHILAPARAPU



REV. A. KOTESWARA RAO



REV. DR. REJI GEORGE



MS. K. KEZIAH GLORY

## THEOLOGY



REV. DR. P. A. SETH



MR. PAOMINTHANG SINGSON



REV. N. S. J. SUDHIR



MR. GUDURU NAVEEN KUMAR

## HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

## RELIGION



MRS. DAISY SOLOMON  
KUMARI PALLIKONDA

## COMMUNICATION/ CHRISTIAN MINISTRY/ COUNSELLING



DR. P. K. REEJA



REV. RAJU DUNNA

# STUDENT OFFICE BEARERS

## STUDENT SECRETARY



**JOSHUA SOLOMON S**

## HOSTEL SECRETARIES



**SUNDAR JAMES S**



**RAVELLA ANAND RAJ**



**MARIAJENISHA T**

## CHAPEL SECRETARIES



**CHAPALA JOHNSON**



**CING DEIH MANG**

## PRACTICAL WORK SECRETARIES



**ARUL PRAKASH S**



**SRI GANESH K**

## MESS SECRETARIES



**LIAN SIAN PIANG**



**KANDULA ROJ KUMAR**

## SPORTS SECRETARIES



**JOEL BLESSING K**



**HANG SIAN MUNG**

## LITERARY SECRETARIES



**J S HOSANNA ARASU**



**CIN PIL MUNG**



**MOSAI F**

# ANNUAL REPORT

Rev. Dr. P. A. Seth  
PRINCIPAL

It is my immense joy to welcome you all, on behalf of BBC family, to the 16th Bachelor of Divinity graduation ceremony and the fifth of extension studies, this day. Your pleasurable presence illuminates and inspires all of us.

First and foremost, all glory and honour to God for enabling us to have this special year as the Silver Jubilee year of BBC. Today, we sincerely remember with gratitude, the Late Rev. Dr. P. N. S. Chandra Bose, the founder of GMI and BBC who imparted a great legacy and vision upon us.

We thank Rev. Dr. Leela Bose, Rev. P. Jeevan Sylvanus Bose and his family and Rev. Pau Za Khup and his family for their earnest efforts to continue the vision and mission of the founder through the ministry of BBC.

Our profound gratitude goes to every individual, organisation and church which is part/partner of this ministry in one or another way.

Our sincere thanks to ISPCK, Delhi, for their continuous partnership in promoting theological education through providing gifts (books) to the graduating students.

We are also grateful to the Bible Society of India Andhra Pradesh Auxiliary for gifting Bibles to our BD graduates.

We remain grateful to all the Churches, organizations and individuals who sponsor and recommend students to BBC. Hearty thanks to all the other dignitaries, graduating students, guests, parents, friends, professors and BBC family.

Congratulations to all the graduating students who have successfully completed all the requirements pertaining to MCS, BD, BCS and DCS degree/diploma studies and are eligible to the award of Bethel Bible College Diploma, this day. I also congratulate the recipients of special awards.

## GRADUATION SPEAKER AND SPECIAL DIGNITARIES

We are grateful to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kamanuri Santhosh Rao, Bishop in Nandyal C.S.I. Diocese for blessing our graduation with his esteemed presence and graduation message.

## STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

We were given admissions for 32 new BD students (2 female and 30 male) during the academic year 2025-26. The academic session started with an opening service on the 8th June 2025. The total numbers of students in the BD degree studies during this academic year are 157.

External-studies program of BBC is flourishing well. We enrolled 12 MCS, 35 BCS and 22 DCS students in the academic year 2025-26.

We are thankful to our former Principal Rev. Dr. S. Robertson for his great contributions to raise our college in the higher levels.

Mr. Paominthang Singson from Manipur and Mr .Guduru Naveen Kumar from Guntur joined our faculty team in this current academic year.

Our special gratitude is to all the faculty members of BBC for their commitment for training and moulding our students for His kingdom. They have wholeheartedly immersed themselves in the ministry of BBC.

The non-teaching staff and the student leaders of BBC deserve our gratitude for their contributions in the smooth functioning of BBC.

## SEMINARS AND PROGRAMS.

Rev. A. Koteswara Rao participated in a “Refresher Course for Science and Religion” subject which was organised from December 01 to 05, 2025 at Senate of Serampore College, Serampore.

Mr. Paominthang Singson was sent by our college to attend the International seminar on “Developing Contextual Theologies: Challenges and Prospectus in Dalit-Adivasi and Minjung contexts”, convened by the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College at SCEPTRE office, Kolkata from 4 to 6 February, 2026.

Mr. Guduru Naveen actively participated in the Faculty Institute for History-Mission Cluster faculty members organized by the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College at Senate office, Serampore from

February 16 to 21, 2026.

Dr. P. K. Reeja and the final year B D. student Ms. Maria Jenisha attended the consultation of “Women in Theological Education: Churches’ Response” organized by the Department of Women Studies, United Theological College, Bengaluru on 11th and 12th February, 2026.

### **RELATION BETWEEN SENATE OF SERAMPORE AND BBC**

Bethel Bible College, Guntur maintains a good rapport with the Senate of Serampore College. Senate Academic Council asked the Principal to be the part of the revision committee member of the B. Th Syllabus in the area of Theology. The New Syllabus will be implemented from June 2026 onwards. The Executive Committee of the Senate appointed Rev. Dr. P. A. Seth as one of the members of Academic Council of the Senate from 2026 to 2028. Dr. P. K. Reeja has appointed as one of the members of the Communication branch in the Senate circle from 2026-28.

### **PRACTICAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE MINISTRY**

BBC is always in touch with the local Churches in an around Guntur without considering any denominational barriers. This current year, under the leadership of Mr. Guduru Naveen, we sent 16 teams to different churches for helping them by participating in their worship services, youth meetings and Sunday school activities.

Our students spent almost one month along with their local presbyters and church believers and did a meaningful practical ministry during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

### **COLLEGE MAGAZINE**

The theme for the Fourth issue of the college magazine Aleph 2026 is "Ebenezer" (Thus far the LORD has helped us). You can participate in this endeavour by advertising your church, institution, organization and personal compliments.

### **GRADUATES**

BBC, till date, has prepared 576 dedicated BD graduates. They represented 18 different states, 32 different churches/denominations and different language groups. 70% of BBC graduates are doing pastoral ministry, 18% of them are in teaching/ higher studies (M.Th. and D.Th) and 5% serve as missionaries. Others are engaged in different forms of ministry including pioneering works.

Within a short period of time BBC also trained 17 MCS, 212 BCS and 257 DCS degree and diploma holders.

We thank God for the life and commitment of the graduating students (MCS 7, BD 32, BCS 11 and DCS 27). They are fully equipped to serve the church and society at large for the glory of God. We wish them God’s blessing as they step out into the wider arena of ministry with multiple challenges and opportunities.

### **LOOKING BACKWARD AND LOOKING FORWARD**

For the growth and stability of BBC, we look backward the past which tells the story that how the almighty God become the ‘Ebenezer’ for us; because, we are crossing the Jubilee year of its milestone in this academic year. And we are looking forward to accomplish our dream to achieve minimum M. Th program within a short span of time. Therefore, we are seeking to establish partnership with right people, churches and organizations. Please join with us and continue to pray for us.

# DISTANCE EDUCATION REPORT

Rev. Raju Dunna  
EXTERNAL STUDIES

We are truly honored to address you about the External studies of the Bethel Bible college, Guntur. It is notable to inform you that Bethel Bible College is an Inter-denominational Bible College founded to invite all the candidates from various church traditions who are called and committed to God's ministry. The college is deeply committed to train young men and women who have a genuine call for evangelistic and pastoral ministries. The college is also committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the building of His Church as the chief aim of theological education. Besides the regular programme of Bachelor of Divinity (BD), the college offers various theological programme through external studies in distance mode, affiliated to Senate of Serampore College (University). The college functions in fulfilling its vision to train young men and women in theological and biblical richness through external programs along with regular programme.

Theological education through external programs has the broad goal of equipping the people of God and the congregations, in their respective contexts, to live out the doxological-liturgical, koinonial, reflective, diakonal and missional dimensions of their existence, with a strong commitment to the liberation of the down-trodden (Dalits, Adivasis, Tribals, Women, the disabled, persons infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, etc.). Reconciliation among all human beings (particularly in the multi-religious and pluralistic contexts), and integration and renewal of God's wider creation (particularly in the context of ecological crises) are also a part of it.

In other words, the aim of theological education is to cultivate an integral and holistic spirituality that would enable the students to be sustained in their commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and be committed to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their living out the truth and values of the Gospel, thereby helping them become faithful and effective ministers/ teachers/ servant leaders in and through the Church and society.

The college has commenced the external programs of the Senate of Serampore College (University) for the last couple of years and has been serving the students in various capacities. The offered programs are Bachelor of Christian Studies (B.C.S), Diploma in Christian Studies (Dip.CS), and Master of Christian Studies (M.C.S.). The courses under the Extension Program are designed in order to address the

contextual, ecumenical and issues of pluralism in theological education. Thus courses are designed keeping in mind the challenges that the students confront in the church and society.

Bachelor of Christian Studies (B.C.S) is offered by the Senate of Serampore College (University) for private study. BCS course is meant purely for external study and students who want to join regular and residential higher theological education have to en-roll for two years BD program. In order to equip the laity with proper theological knowledge so that they can witness more effectively to the Gospel of Christ in various capacities and under different circumstances the Bachelor of Christian Studies (BCS) course is introduced as an extension programme of the Senate of Serampore College (University). It is designed to provide the laity from different walks of life with academic skills for an in-depth understanding of Christian faith, history, doctrines and practical dimensions of ministry to interact with their neighbors and colleagues in their common quest for meaning in life.

Diploma in Christian Studies (Dip.CS) is a basic theological course that teaches fundamentals of Christian theology. Dip.CS course helps and prepare the laity of the church to take up leadership position in the various ministries of the church and exposes the students to meet the challenges of social realities. Dip.CS course is meant purely for external study, but for interested persons there is an opportunity to advance their theological knowledge by doing higher studies both external and regular.

Master of Christian Studies (M.C.S.) is a post-B.C.S/B.D programme, primarily meant for laity and Christian ministers who wish to continue theological studies through extension programs. It is designed to provide Christian professionals, Church workers and laity with in-depth theological knowledge to facilitate effective leadership in the Church and society. It is a post-graduate professional degree course for the laity and Christian ministers who cannot enroll for a post-graduate regular course like Master of Theology (M. Th.). M.C.S. is not equivalent to M.Th, and neither will be accepted for teaching in theological Seminaries. M.C.S. is a two-year program in which the first is foundational, and in the second year, a student will choose his or her area of specialization. Thesis writing will also be done in the second year. The objectives of the programme is to provide an opportunity for ongoing learning for the spiritual (both individual and communitarian)

and vocational growth of the candidate within his/her context.

The external programs are meant to provide theological education as a critical transforming influence in personal, ecclesial and societal life in India/South Asia. The courses also provide tools for interpreting the Word of God in the social, economic and political context of the society and enable persons to become effective witnesses in the context of their varied and diversified vocations. These programs enable the students to study the interaction of Christianity with people of other faiths and cultures and facilitate lay leadership in church and society with the study of Christianity, its history, faith and practices. The primary aim of external programs is to promote theological education in regional languages as well as in English.

The graduates of the external programmes are from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamilnadu, and Maharashtra. The students from various church traditions are welcome to avail this opportunity to be equipped with theological orientation and biblical knowledge. So it's our wish and invites you all to be part of this external programme and serve the church and society to build the Reign of God.

Thanking You

Your's  
Rev. Raju Dunna  
External Studies  
BBC

## LIBRARY REPORT

Rev. Dr. P. A. Seth  
LIBRARY IN-CHARGE

Our library is equipped with essential facilities, and we update our collection annually by adding new books and journals.

1. Library Timings: The library is open from Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., and again from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., with a night library session from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. On Saturdays, it is open from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., along with the night library session from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., and it remains closed on Sundays and all college holidays.

2. Books, Journals, Periodicals, and Unpublished Theses: Our library holds 18,000 volumes of books for the academic year 2025–2026. This year, approximately 1,000 new books were added, contributed by faculty members and well-wishers of Bethel Bible College. The library also has journals and periodicals, along with 250 unpublished theses. This year, we added some new journals and 5 unpublished theses to the collection.

3. Facilities: Our library is equipped with all the necessary facilities required for a modern library, including computer systems which Koha Software, a printer, a photocopier, internet, and Wi-Fi connection and power backup.

I thank the staffs who maintained the library in a good way. It would be incomplete not to mention the class representatives (CRs) who take care of the night library. The smooth functioning of the library would not be possible without their contributions.

With these facilities and the support of the faculty and student body, the library continues to function smoothly. The library committee would like to acknowledge the support and contributions from the community. We also thank God for His guidance and for helping us successfully complete the academic year 2025–2026.

# CHAPEL REPORT

Dr. P. K. REEJA  
CHAPLAIN

Indeed, it is my great privilege to stretch a report in relation to the BBC chapel and students' spiritual life. We recall that God, the Ebenezer meant for us, is the Lord of help not only in the past, but also in the present and into the future. The word Ebenezer focuses on God's faithfulness. It emphasizes the vital importance of remembrance in the Christian journey.

The Ebenezer God helped Bethel Bible College to look back and declare how God was leading and guiding us the past years. God's unwavering support and protection have been with us thus far, and we have the hope in future will also be with us. Our college's focus is to equip the young men and women to be the committed servants of God and remember God's relentless help in their lives and ministry. The BBC always aimed at the spiritual and ministerial progress of the students along with the academic matters. Ebenezer is not just about looking back but also about the faithfulness of God in the days to come. God was protecting our community from all kinds of difficulties and problems and gave us strength, protection and success. There will be trials and hardship ahead, yet we keep the hope and confidence that the God who has helped us thus far will be with us to guide and sustain the BBC community.

I am thankful to our Almighty God for being with us and guiding us throughout this academic year 2025-26. We aim at the holistic and harmonious development of our students. The chapel department basically helps the students to exercise and experience the practical dimension of what they are learning from God's word and from the class. In the midst of many ups and downs, God enabled us to grow in Him throughout the year. In the BBC, each day we begin and end with devotion and prayer in the chapel.

Our morning chapel service starts at 8 a.m and evening service at 6.40 p.m every Monday to Friday. Every morning, faculty and students attend the service and renew their hope and strength in the Lord. Teachers and B D third and fourth year students used to preach in the morning sessions. BD first years are sharing their personal experiences and testimonies in the evenings and second years are sharing from the word of God. Twice a week, final year students will conduct evaluation sermons and on Fridays. We have sermon evaluation classes, which help the students to understand different ways and approaches and improve their preaching skills. Once a week, we conduct Bible Quiz for all students. We have set apart time for praise and worship, and learning hymns and new songs. We conduct a scripture knowledge examination for all classes. Students are gathering for the intercessory prayer every afternoon. They also form prayer groups to inspire each other for their spiritual growth. We conduct Sunday worship services in the evening 6-7 p.m. Since our community members belong to different denominations, we follow their order of worship in our services so that the students can practice their church's worship pattern. We encourage students to render their service the ministry of local churches.

I am thankful to Mr. Chapala Johnson and Ms. Cing Deih Mang, the chapel secretaries, for rendering tireless service in the chapel. Above all, I thank God Almighty for all the help, guidance and blessings in this academic year.

# PRACTICAL MINISTRY REPORT

Mr. G. Naveen Kumar  
PRACTICAL MINISTRY IN-CHARGE

Greetings in the Blessed name of the Lord! I'm truly honored to update you about the practical ministry work of Bethel Bible College. Before that, it is noteworthy that Bethel Bible College is a non-denominational theological institution fostering an inclusive community for students called to serve. Our mission is to prepare the next generation Christian ministers and leaders by providing a rigorous, biblically based education. We welcome students from diverse church backgrounds, fostering a balanced approach of high academic standards, deep spiritual maturity, and practical ministerial skill.

Practical ministry programs play a significant role in shaping future leaders by fostering competencies essential for effective pastoral and institutional leadership. As Karl Barth underscores the theological work, asserting that "theology is a service of the Church." Theological education at Bethel Bible College aims not only at intellectual formation but also at the preparation of individuals for faithful and effective ministry. While biblical theology, and history of Christian Churches provide conceptual frameworks, practical ministry ensures that theological reflection is embodied in pastoral action. To make this possible, Bethel Bible College is deeply dedicated to send the students to the local parish/ congregations, churches, NGO's in the fulfillment of practical work designed by Senate of Serampore College (University).

The chief objective of this practical ministry program is to advance the skills in students for pastoral care and church administration. The practical ministry program facilitates the students to reach the local churches and parishes during the weekends. The strategic role of the students in visiting the churches/parishes and congregations enables them to develop a spirituality that is both personal and community centered.

The students are allotted to the churches and congregations based on the God-given talents and interests. They engage in teaching the Sunday school, conducting youth fellowships, leading praise and worship sessions. They also assist the pastors in liturgy and administrations of the sacraments periodically.

The active participations of the students in the church services enables them to learn the worship patterns of different church traditions. The students are welcomed by the church pastors and church officials to gain the ministerial exposure through preaching, singing, worshipping God, and conducting Bible study.

The concurrent weekend Practical training ministry for all the students as it runs throughout the academic year, this program empowers the students to gain rich experience on pastoral care, church organization and pastoral administration. During this period the students are assigned to different ecclesiastical parishes/ congregations representing Jehovah Shalom Church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, St. Martin's Lutheran Church, St. John's Church CSI, Telugu Baptist Church, St. John's Lutheran Church, ECI Gethsemane Evangelical Church, United Christian Church, Carmel Gospel Ministries, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Jeevadhpathi Gospel Ministries, St. Thomas Lutheran Church, Local Church of India, Kristhu Krupa Ministries and Jesus Calls. We are grateful to the above stated churches, congregations, fellowships for helping us to reach out the people communities through your ministry opportunities.

A great sense of coordination and initiation is anticipated from the Christian communities to share our vision in shaping God's men and women for God's kingdom. We would like to be associated with churches for building relationships with the BETHEL BIBLE COLLEGE through the network of practical ministry program.

# MEDIA AND LITERARY COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. K. Keziah Glory  
 MEDIA AND LITERARY COMMITTEE IN-CHARGE

As part of the Media and Literary Committee, numerous programs were conducted at Bethel Bible College (BBC) during this academic year. Our committee chose the theme “**Ebenezer**”, reflecting on God’s faithfulness throughout the 25-year journey of our college.

**Fundraising:** For the publication of Aleph 2026, funds were raised through various initiatives. Within the campus, food items such as corns and chicken curry were sold, and two rounds of lucky draws were conducted. We were also blessed by the generous support of St. Peter’s Church, Thiruppalai, and Yesuvin Agni Juvalai Church, Kanyakumari, who contributed financially in response to the fundraising letters we sent.

**Literary Day:** Literary Day was held on 16th September 2026. A variety of literary competitions were organized to encourage students to showcase their talents. In addition, a fun zone with games and food stalls provided a space for relaxation and fellowship.

**Cultural Day:** BBC is a vibrant community enriched with diverse cultures. To celebrate this diversity, Cultural Day was organized on 17th October 2026. Students enthusiastically presented their cultural heritage through various performances, making the event colourful and memorable.

**Publication of Magazine:** The 4th edition of the Aleph Magazine was designed, edited, and published by the Media and Literary Committee. Both students and faculty contributed creatively through articles, poems, and other literary works, making the magazine a meaningful compilation.

I sincerely thank my media team (Joshua Solomon, Ritchie Joshua, and Richie John) for their constant dedication in capturing, editing, and uploading events and programs on BBC’s social media platforms. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the members of the Literary Committee for their hard work and commitment throughout the year. I am indebted to our Principal, Rev. Dr. P.A. Seth for his constant support and encouragement at each juncture of our works.

Above all, I thank God for His guidance and faithfulness in every endeavour of our committee works.

*It is happy to raise an Ebenezer in distress  
 but it is our duty as Christians to be with people  
 in their distress and help them to raise an  
 Ebenezer in their lives*

# GRADUATION SPEECH

KANDULA ROJ KUMAR  
BD IV

Praise be to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Esteemed dignitaries on the dais, honored guests, beloved faculty, dear parents, and my fellow students, warm greetings to you all.

It is a great privilege and joyful honor for me to stand before you today and offer this student response on behalf of graduating students. This day is not merely the end of a course of study; it is a day of thanksgiving, reflection, and dedication. It marks the close of one important chapter and the beginning of another in our lives and ministry.

First and foremost, we thank Almighty God, whose grace has sustained us until this day. Whatever we have achieved is not by our own strength, but by His faithfulness, mercy, and guidance. Through every lesson, every test, every challenge, and every moment of uncertainty, God has been with us. Today, with humble hearts, we acknowledge that this graduation is a testimony to His unfailing goodness.

We also express our sincere gratitude to Bethel Bible College, Guntur, for shaping our lives and equipping us for ministry. In Hebrew, Bethel means “House of God,” and truly this institution has been such a place for us—a place of learning, spiritual formation, and preparation for God’s calling.

16 Here, we were not only taught in classrooms, but also molded in character, discipline, and vision. The motto of our college, “Commitment to Serve,” has left a deep impression on our hearts. It reminds us that those who are formed in the House of God are sent into the world to serve with humility, faithfulness, and love.

On this meaningful occasion, we gratefully remember the God-given vision of Rev. Dr. P. N. S. Chandra Bose Sir, through whom the Gospel Mission of India was founded, under which Bethel Bible College continues its noble ministry. His vision, dedication, and burden for theological education have blessed many lives and helped prepare generations of servants for the Kingdom of God. Today, we are thankful to stand as beneficiaries of that vision and legacy.

25 Our college has produced many graduates who now serve faithfully in churches, mission fields, and ministries in different places. We count it a great privilege to become part of that living legacy.

Our heartfelt thanks go to our respected teachers and faculty members. Dear teachers, you have done far more than teach lessons from books. You have guided us, corrected us, encouraged us, prayed for us, and patiently walked with us through our years of formation. Through your instruction and example, you have helped to shape our minds and hearts for the work of God. Your sacrifice and commitment will remain in our memories for years to come.

We also extend our loving gratitude to our parents, families, and all those who supported us directly and indirectly. Your prayers, sacrifices, encouragement, and trust have carried us through this journey. Many of you stood behind us quietly, bearing burdens that we may never fully understand. Today, this joy is not ours alone; it belongs to you as well.

As students, our seminary journey has been filled with many unforgettable memories. Hostel life, classroom discussions, assignments, chapel services, prayer meetings, ministry exposure, practical work, friendships, and even moments of struggle have become part of our formation. These experiences have made our expedition meaningful and memorable. We came here from different places, with different stories and expectations, but along the way, we became a community. We learned together, supported one another, faced challenges together, and grew together.

When we first entered this campus, many of us were uncertain, nervous, and perhaps even afraid. But over time, this institution became our second home. Here, we found friendship, guidance, discipline, and confidence. We were trained not only to gain knowledge, but also to live with purpose. We learned not merely how to study theology, but how to live for Christ, serve Christ, and remain faithful to Him in every season of life. Indeed, student life in a seminary is a period of formation. It is a sacred season in which God prepares His servants. The lessons we received here are not meant to remain in notebooks alone; they must be lived out in our ministries, churches, communities, and personal lives. What we have learned within these walls must now become visible through our service in the world.

As graduates, we now stand at the threshold of a new beginning. Some may be called to pastoral ministry, some to mission work, some to teaching, some to leadership, and some to other forms of Christian service. Though our paths may differ, our calling remains one: to serve God faithfully and to serve

God faithfully and to serve people lovingly. The motto, "Commitment to Serve," must not remain only the motto of our college; it must become the motto of our lives.

To our dear continuing students, I would like to say this: value your time in this institution. Learn deeply, serve joyfully, pray sincerely, and grow faithfully. The days you spend here are precious. Every class, every prayer, every correction, and every experience is preparing you for the future God has for you.

We carry from this institution far more than a degree. We carry precious memories, valuable lessons, and friendships that have shaped our lives. With gratitude, hope, and a sense of responsibility, we now look ahead in faith. What we have received here is a gift, and what we do with it will be our offering to God. As I conclude, let me leave this simple thought before you all: Let us learn, let us serve, and let us love and may these never cease in the life of a Christian minister.

Thank you all for your love, prayers, and support. God bless you all



## **BEST COMPLIMENTS FROM**

**KANDULA ROJ KUMAR S/O REV. K. JOSEPH KUMAR**

**C.S.I. DORNAKAL DIOCESE**

# FAREWELL SPEECH

POOTHY SAMUEL BENNY  
BD III

Many times in life we ask God, “Where are you calling me?” And sometimes God asks us a different question “Who will go for me?”

And throughout the Bible, faithful people answered with just three simple words

“Here I am.”

Abraham said Hineni when God called him in Genesis.

Samuel said Hineni when he heard God’s voice in the night in 1 Samuel.

And Isaiah responded, “Here I am, send me,” when God called him in Isaiah.

Those words were not long speeches. They were not perfect plans. They were simply hearts ready to respond.

In many ways, that is what today represents for our dear seniors.

During these years, you have been like lamps among us sharing knowledge, friendship, encouragement, and laughter.

A lamp is not meant to remain in one place forever; it is meant to carry light wherever darkness exists. And today, as you step into a new journey, it feels as though you are once again responding to God’s call - Hineni\_ ... Here I am, send me.

With that spirit, I would like to express my sincere vote of thanks.

First and foremost, I thank God Almighty for bringing us together for this special occasion. It is by His grace that we have shared so many wonderful moments, learned from one another, and built relationships that will last a lifetime. We are truly grateful for His love, guidance, and blessings in our journey. It is also an honor to stand here today and express our heartfelt gratitude to our beloved seniors as we bid you farewell. Saying goodbye is never easy, but every farewell also opens the door to new beginnings. Dear seniors, thank you for being more than just seniors to us. You have been our mentors, our friends, and our role models. Your guidance, support, and encouragement have meant so much to us, and we will always cherish the time we have shared together.

Looking back, we realize how much we have learned from you. You have taught us the value of hard work, friendship, and perseverance. The laughter, the challenges, and the many memories we created together will always remain special to us. As you step into the next phase of your lives, we pray that God continues to guide and bless you. On behalf of all the juniors, we wish you success, joy, and fulfillment in your future ministries and endeavors. Please remember that you will

always have brothers and sisters here who will continue to keep you in their prayers.

A very special thanks to our honored guests, Leela Bose Ma’am and Jeevan Sir, for gracing this occasion with your presence. Your support and encouragement mean a great deal to us, and we are truly grateful that you could be here with us today.

I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to our respected faculty members for their unwavering dedication and mentorship. Your constant support and guidance have shaped us in many ways, and we are blessed to have you as our teachers and guides.

My heartfelt thanks also go to the entire student community. It is because of your hard work, dedication, and teamwork that this event has been possible. Your efforts have made this evening meaningful and memorable.

As we conclude this gathering, we send our seniors forward with gratitude, love, and prayers. May God guide your steps and bless the journey ahead.

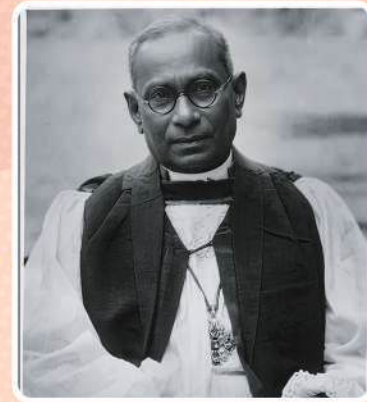
And wherever life takes you, may your hearts always be ready to say “Here I am, send me”.

# Royal Priesthood Family



Rev. Vemuri Devasahayam  
S/o Vemuri Benjamin

Ordained by Rt. Rev. V. S. Azariah

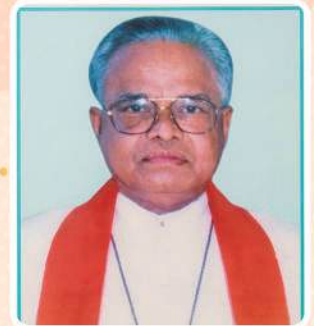


Mr. Vemuri Prathapa Rao ,  
S/o Rev. Vemuri Devasahyam  
Govt. District Registrar  
(Srikakulam)



Rev. Vemuri Chittaranajan Samson  
S/o Mr. Vemuri Prathapa Rao

Ordained by  
Rt. Rev. T. B. D. Prakasha Rao



Dr. V. Unice Kiran, Doctor (left),  
Rev. Vemuri Devasahayam(center),  
Mr. Richard Ranjan Samson,  
Sr. Asst. Loco pilot (right)

(Family of Rev. Vemuri  
Chittranjan Samson & Usha Kiran)

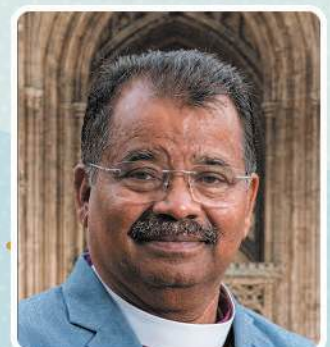
Mr. Vemuri Devasahayam  
S/o Rev. Vemuri Chittaranajan  
Samson



Rev. Vemuri Chittaranajan Samson & Smt. V. Usha Kiran Samson (Served as Evangelist). They both served approximately 30 years in Krishna Godavari Diocese. Rev. Vemuri Chittaranajan Samson ordained in 1991 in KG Diocese. He was promoted to glory on 12-07-2011. Smt. V. Usha Kiran Samson was promoted to glory on 08-05-2021 after her 10 years of service in the Krishna Godavari Diocese.



Ordained by  
Rt. Rev. T. George Cornelious



# DISCERNING DIVINE HELP IN THE DISRUPTIVE WORLD



REV. CH. CHITTI BABU  
REGISTRAR

One of the important statements mentioned by prophet-judge Samuel was Ebenezer which literally means “stone of help” [“Thus far the Lord has helped us” (I Sam. 7:12)]. It is considered as a profound witness to God. This article attempts to study the broader scenario of this historical event (I Samuel 4-7) and imply the biblical lesions to the contemporary convoluted world.

## Ancient Belief on Victory

It is generally believed that the victory over enemy is also considered as the victory over enemy’s god. On the contrary, in the later stage it was painfully discovered by the philistines that it is not true. Previously, Israelites brought ark to the battlefield but it did not secure their victory. Perhaps, the Israelites might have recalled earlier incidents. When the ark was carried out they had defeated the city of Jericho (Jos. 3:11, 17; 6:6, 12). In this context the ark had not guaranteed the victory and it was not a magical talisman.

## Geo-Political and Religious Context

During the time of Judges and the early part of monarchic period Israelites had faced an external threat by the Philistines. Philistines had controlled the tribe of Judah and kept

pressure on tribal regions of north. This can be observed during the time of charismatic leader, Samson (Judges 13-16). In addition, they also faced internal instability through conflicts. As a federated leader Samuel had attempted to consolidate all the tribes of Israelites to face them. In addition, one can notice that Israelites were well aware of the Canaanite deities namely Baal (god of fertility) and Ashtoreth (god of thunderstorm) and used to worship them. In other words, it is called apostasy. This is part of cycle we observe in the time of judges i.e. apostasy-oppression-repentance-deliverance (Judges 2:11-23).

From the broader narrative I Samuel 4-7 we observe defeat as well as victory of Israelites. In this narrative the Ark of the Covenant had played a vital role. Earlier, the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the most holy place and from this place God used to talk with Moses. At present, it is connected with the priesthood of the family of Eli and Abinadab; the former refers the glory of God departed and the latter shows the glory of God had returned. It can be noted that after the Philistines were afflicted with tumors, they sent the ark to Kiriathjearim.

## Kiriathjearim

This is the nearest town on the road from Bethshemesh to Shiloh. It is chief city of the Gibeonites. When the Philistines sent back the Ark of the Covenant, it was kept at this place under the custody of Abinadab and became a permanent place for two decades. It was kept here because the Philistines had captured the

ark and destroyed the ancient sanctuary. Slowly things got changed and people started to mourn finally genuine repentance followed.

## Mizpah

In such context, Samuel gathered people at Mizpah, a place of military campaign as well as worship and exhorted the Israelites to worship Yahweh alone. This place was annually visited by Samuel to judge the Israel. The pouring out of water symbolically represents the temporal and spiritual distress the Israelites were in. True repentance was made possible by Israelites with fasting.

## Divine Help

Monuments were important milestones to describe the past glory and heritage and perhaps these places may not be victories ones. However, they are profound witnesses to God. Israel got miraculous divine help from Yahweh in the form of thundering voice and Philistines were confused. It shows that people’s deliverance will not come from the strength of the people alone but only through the powerful action of the divine.

## Role of Samuel

Samuel interceded for the spiritual revival and made a burnt offering. Historians find it hard to mention the

leadership of Samuel as a heroic one, but he united all tribes in the war against Philistines by boldly depending Yahweh alone. From this we observe an anthropological development in leadership i.e. Samuel as a prophet-judge who mixed charismatic gifts with the juridical responsibilities and was able to bring several districts under a single legal administration. Until the death of Eli, Samuel was in Shiloh and in the latter days of his life he moved to his native town Ramah and built an altar.

### Peace

Peace and national security were maintained under the leadership of Samuel throughout his life. In other words, Philistines menace was kept under control during his tenure. As a result, he could be moved freely and served as spiritual leader and judge.

### Disruptions in the World

The contemporary world is marked by many disruptions. Currently, geopolitics of West Asia has been changing and the global energy resources are being blocked by Iran which is passing through Strait of Hormuz. India is one of the largest consumer and importer of the crude oil. Crude oil is processed in refineries and converted into various products namely Petrol, diesel, LPG and Petrochemicals. It has heavily depended on imported crude oil and built large refining capacity. The welfare program under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has provided 10.33 crore new connections and it is called as transformation. With the disrupted Strait of Hormuz shipping lanes and the inadequate storage, common people in India are suffering. As a result, the economy of the nation is dwindling. In addition, power politics, autocracy is thriving in the name of wealth in the globe. At this juncture, being sensible to other faiths and responsible to one's own faith is important in the midst of these challenges like the biblical character Samuel to discern divine help.



**IT SHOWS THAT PEOPLE'S DELIVERANCE WILL NOT COME FROM THE STRENGTH OF THE PEOPLE ALONE BUT ONLY THROUGH THE POWERFUL ACTION OF THE DIVINE.**



## A Song of the Stone

A faith in the stone,  
God's help I have known.  
Through battles and night,  
He gives me His light.

Help in the stone,  
I'm never alone.  
His hand is my shield,  
His power revealed.

Protection in the stone,  
His love is well shown.  
No fear can I see,  
For He watches me.

So I raise up my stone,  
To make His strength known.  
"Thus far by His grace,  
I stand in this place."



**Bhanu Raj Kumar**

BD-III

# GOD THE EZER CREATED WOMAN AS AN EZER

DR. P. K. REEJA  
CHAPLAIN



## Introduction

A woman is created to be a strong helper in various levels—within marriage, family, society and ministry. The concept of the woman as an “ezer” in Genesis Ch. 2:18 is not a position of subordination but rather an affirmation of her essential, equal status and role in God’s creation. God created her an indispensable partner, empowered to work alongside the man in cultivating and stewarding the creation. Her actions demonstrate that being a helper involves active engagement and leadership within the family and society. God has made the woman as a helper not only in the past but also to continue to help in the present and future.

## Ezer

The Hebrew word ‘Ezer,’ meaning ‘help’ or ‘helper,’ denotes someone who provides support, assistance or aid. In English, the word ‘helper’ can often convey an idea of subservience and amenability. Helpers can be friends, family members, colleagues, volunteers, or professionals. The nature of help can vary depending on the context, but the core idea remains the same: assisting to accomplish a task, overcome a challenge or improve a situation.

The Bible gives the meaning as divine

help beyond the idea of someone who merely lends a hand. Prophetic books refer to nations that Israel beseeches for military aid (Isa. 20:5, Ez. 12:14, Dan. 11:34). Ps. 33:20 emphasises the protective and supportive nature of God’s presence in His people’s lives. The word ‘ezer’ is used many times in the Bible to describe God as the helper of Israel. (Ex. 18:4; Ps. Ps.115:9-11; 121:1-2). This clarifies that the helper is not subordinate but rather a figure of strength, support, and necessity. The word ‘helper’ in the Bible is deeply rooted in the creation narrative and extends throughout the scripture, illustrating a multifaceted role that encompasses support, partnership and divine assistance.

## Woman as the Indispensable Helper

A woman as a helper plays vital role as a mother, sister, wife, and daughter. Her help influences and shapes the core of family and society. Genesis 2:18 “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” This has been commonly (mis)understood and used to downgrade women to a subordinate position, as mere assistants or helpers to men. God is the stronghold helper of Israel and is not subordinate to them; therefore, when God created the woman as a helper, she should not be viewed as subordinate to men. Hence, the woman as a helper is an affirmation of her essential, coequal status and role in God’s good creation. Her role is an indispensable partner to work along with the man in nurturing and stewarding God’s creation. The following are

some of the roles of women as helpers:

## Woman as a Partner in Life

A wife as a strong supporter contributes to the stability and success of a marriage, which is the foundation of a family. The ‘ezer’ role of a wife is beyond childbearing, though procreation is a vital aspect of her partnership with the man. She supports and strengthens him in various facets of life. In the context of marriage, the helper is considered an equal partner, contributing to the unity and purpose of the marital relationship. Prov. 31:10-31 portrays a virtuous wife who exemplifies the role of a helper through her industriousness, wisdom, and care for her household. Her help enhances the husband’s reputation and benefits the family. She shares the responsibilities of maintaining a home and supporting the emotional and financial needs of the family as an equal partner. We read in 1 Samuel Chapter 25 that Abigail, wife of Nabal, with her wisdom, protected her household from David’s wrath.

In Gen. 2:18, the role of the woman as a helper is not a passive but an active commitment. It represents the profound concept of a strong, essential co-worker. The Bible refers to the meaning of “help” as saviour, rescuer,

and protector and nowhere does it mean an inferior but always an equal or superior help, expressing that the woman is a help or strength who rescues or saves man. The woman was not created to serve the man but to serve along with him. God's intention in creating the woman for the man was for the two to be partners in all the areas of their lives and in stewarding God's creation.

### **Woman as a Mother**

A mother is the heart and the pillar of every family. Mothers often play crucial roles in nurturing, supporting, and sustaining their families as strong, capable figures. The nurturing role of a mother plays is fundamental to the physical, emotional, and mental development of her children. From infancy to adulthood, a mother shapes the values, morals and beliefs that children carry throughout their lives. Mothers help create, as primary caregivers, emotionally balanced, empathetic and productive individuals who can contribute to society's growth in various ways.

The icon of a mother reflects the nurturing, life-giving, and sustaining power. It shows the crucial role mothers play in forming individual lives and society as a whole. We learn love, kindness, patience and resilience from mothers and practice them in society. The mother's sacrifices are overlooked, and she is frequently unseen and unrecognised but always acts as a strong helper.

### **Woman as a Sister**

A sister is a source of support and friendship to all siblings in the family. A sister is not just a sibling but a lifelong companion, confidante, and source of emotional support from childhood. Sisters share common experiences, challenges, and triumphs from childhood to adulthood. They offer understanding and empathy, creating a sense of connection and solidarity that often lasts for a lifetime. This bond plays a significant role in well-being, as sisters provide emotional comfort during times of stress, happiness, or adversity. The role of a sister also extends beyond family, influencing others in their community and society. Their relationship encourages teamwork, communication and sharing of ideas, which are essential for a healthy society; for example, Miriam was taking care of Moses in childhood, and she was at his side throughout his leadership.

### **A Woman as a Daughter**

A daughter carries forward her family's values, culture, and traditions. She contributes to the family's continuity by upholding these values. In many cultures, daughters are the grace of family heritage and often play a critical role in preserving traditions and passing them on to future generations. Though the discrimination of daughters starts even before their birth, they play a vital role in societies that often goes unnoticed; for example, girls begin their caregiving role in the family even

before starting their primary schooling. In the Old Testament, the daughters of Zelophehad set a model for the inclusion of women in inheritance laws by asking for the right to inherit their father's property (Num. 27:1-11). The captive girl became a rescuer of Naaman (1 Kings 5). In the book of Acts Ch. 21:9, we see the role played in the early church by the daughters of Philip as prophetesses.

### **Women as Helpers in Society**

Women are the backbone of every society, playing fundamental roles as strong helpers in need, as nurturers, as supporters, and in shaping society. Women are indeed intelligent, hard-working, and efficient in work. They put heart and soul into whatever they undertake, from taking care of the child as a mother to serve many sick people as a doctor or nurse, and from shielding the family to defend the nation as a commander of the military.

Women have a God-given and natural tendency to serve the people. In the field of social service, women are active participants. They are not only serving the suffering humanity but also bring development and success for the society; e.g., Mother Teresa was doing selfless service to the poor, needy, and sick people, and Jael killed Sisera with her courage and gave the victory to Israel.

### **Women as Helpers in the Ministry**

Women are called to be strong helpers in ministry. They are vital agents in the proclamation of the Gospel. Women serve in countless ways, using their God-given gifts to build the Kingdom of God. They have served as missionaries, caring for the sick, feeding the hungry, providing for the needs of the saints, and sharing the Gospel with those who have never heard. Women are rendering their help in the church, serving in ways that have strengthened the body of Christ. They serve as counsellors, providing emotional and spiritual support to those who are distressed, healing the broken hearted, and strengthening the weary. The Bible gives many examples of women stepping into leadership roles and leading with grace, wisdom, and strength.

### **Conclusion**

God made woman as the helper not to the man alone but to the family, society, and the very creation of God. Understanding the role of women as strong helpers encourages us to recognize their essential contributions in all areas of life. Ebenezer means 'thus far the Lord has helped,' reminding us that through all our defeats and shortcomings, God's grace and goodness have brought us thus far. The journey is not over. There are more difficulties, troubles, and limitations ahead. Yet, we can be confident that the God who has helped women to play the role of helpers will continue to guide and sustain us to be the helpers to fulfil the divine design of God.

# REMEMBERING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS:

## Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

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### Introduction

Life rarely slows down long enough for us to notice how far we've come. Days pass quickly, responsibilities pile up, and our focus constantly shifts toward what lies ahead like goals to achieve, problems to solve, and uncertainties to face. In the middle of this constant movement, something essential is often lost that is the practice of remembering.

We move from one season to another without pausing to reflect. We overcome challenges, yet fail to acknowledge the strength it took to endure them. We receive blessings, yet quickly turn our attention to the next need. Over time, this habit of rushing forward causes us to forget the very experiences that could strengthen us.

Remembering is not simply looking back, it is a spiritual discipline. It grounds us, reassures us, and reminds us that our journey has not been walked alone. In remembering, we begin to see meaning in our experiences and recognize the faithfulness that has carried us through every season.

### Ebenezer: A Biblical Foundation of Remembrance

The Bible presents a powerful image

of remembrance through the story of Ebenezer. In 1 Samuel 7:12, the prophet Samuel set up a stone and named it Ebenezer, declaring, "Thus far the Lord has helped us." This act was not merely symbolic; it was intentional. It marked a moment where the people of Israel paused to acknowledge that their victories were not achieved by their own strength alone.

That stone became a visible reminder of God's faithfulness. Each time they saw it, they were reminded of battles won, struggles overcome, and divine help received. It anchored their memory and strengthened their faith for the future.

Though we may not build physical monuments today, the principle remains deeply relevant. In a fast-paced world filled with distractions, we need our own forms of remembrance—ways to pause and recognize how far we have come and who has helped us along the way.

### Ebenezer as a Spiritual Anchor

In today's world, many women live lives filled with responsibility and quiet sacrifice. They balance family, career, relationships, and personal growth, often without recognition. Their victories are not always visible or celebrated, yet they are deeply significant.

Their life is filled with questions, and uncertainty is part of their journey. The Bible does not hide this reality; instead, it reveals it through the lives of women who wrestled with doubt and confusion.

Sarah once laughed in disbelief at the thought of having a child in her old age. Rebekah questioned the pain and struggle she was experiencing. Mary Magdalene worried about who would move the stone blocking her path. In each of these moments, they could not see what God was already doing.

What appeared to be impossible was already being prepared. What felt uncertain was already under divine control. Their questions did not disqualify them; instead, they became part of their journey of faith. This truth is deeply reassuring. It reminds us that asking questions does not mean we lack faith, it often means we are in the process of growing.

In a world filled with constant change, remembering becomes a source of stability. Women today face pressures that can feel overwhelming with emotional burdens, comparisons, expectations, and fears about the future. In such moments, looking back can provide clarity and strength.

When we reflect on past experiences, we begin to notice a pattern. Situations that once felt impossible were somehow overcome. Seasons of pain eventually passed. Strength appeared just when it was needed. Slowly, we begin to realize that we

made it through. Not by our own strength alone, but with help. This realization transforms our perspective. Instead of asking, “How will I get through this?” we begin to say, “I have been through difficult seasons before, and I was sustained.” Remembering becomes a spiritual anchor, grounding us in truth and strengthening us to face the present.

There is quiet but powerful strength in remembering past victories. When we intentionally reflect on what we have overcome, something shifts within us. Fear begins to lose its grip because we have seen ourselves endure before. Doubt weakens because we have evidence of resilience. Confidence grows as we recognize that we are capable of more than we once believed.

More importantly, we begin to see a pattern of faithfulness. We notice how help came at the right time, how strength appeared when we felt weakest, and how circumstances worked out in ways we did not expect. Remembering reminds us that we are not starting from nothing. We are standing on a foundation built from past experiences of grace, strength, and endurance. Beyond strength, remembering also brings healing. Often, once we move past difficult seasons, we minimize them. We tell ourselves that it was not as hard as it felt or that we simply managed to get through. But when we pause and reflect, we begin to see the full picture. We recognize the courage it took to endure, the growth that came through struggle, and the grace that sustained us.

This process allows us to honour our journey. It helps us appreciate not only where we are now, but also what we have been through. Instead of dismissing our struggles, we begin to see them as meaningful chapters in our story.

When these stories are shared, they become powerful sources of encouragement. One woman’s experience can bring hope to another who is still struggling. What once felt like a breaking point becomes a testimony of survival and strength. In this way, remembering not only strengthens us personally but also allows us to uplift others.

### Creating Personal Ebenezers

While Samuel set up a physical stone, today we create our own forms of remembrance. These may take different shapes, but they serve the same purpose. Some people write down their prayers and the ways they were answered. Others keep gratitude journals, recording moments of blessing and provision. Some reflect quietly during devotional time, while others share their experiences with those around them.

These practices become personal Ebenezers which can be seen as markers that remind us of God’s faithfulness. Over time,

they form a record of our journey, one that we can return to during moments of doubt or discouragement. They help us see clearly what we might otherwise forget.

### Conclusion

“Thus far the Lord has helped us.” This declaration is not just a reflection of the past—it is a promise for the present and the future. It reminds us that no matter what lies ahead, we are not starting from nothing. We are standing on a strong foundation built from past grace, strength, and victories. Remembering does not hold us back; it moves us forward with confidence. It gives us strength for today and fills us with hope for tomorrow. And in that hope, we find the courage to keep going, trusting that the same faithfulness that has carried us this far will continue to guide us in the days to come.

“

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”

# EBENEZER AND TRIBAL THEOLOGY: The Significance of Monoliths in Tribal Culture Related to Samuel's Ebenezer

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## Introduction

The biblical narrative of 1 Samuel 7:12, the prophet Samuel erects a stone and names it as Ebenezer, declaring, "Thus far the LORD has helped us." This "stone of help" (from the Hebrew Eben ha-Ezer) stands as a memorial to God's deliverance of Israel from the Philistines after a period of repentance and divine intervention. The stone marks a pivotal moment of victory, gratitude, and remembrance, serving as an enduring witness to God's faithfulness amid hardship.

This biblical act finds intriguing parallels in the tribal cultures of Northeast India, among the Naga, Kuki, Mizo, Khasi tribes. Here, monoliths large standing stones or megaliths are erected during feasts of merit, ancestor veneration, and community milestones. These stones commemorate achievements, social status, spiritual encounters, and communal unity, much like Ebenezer commemorates divine helps. Tribal Theology, a contextual Christian theology emerging in India since the late 20th century, draws on such indigenous symbols to reinterpret Christian faith. It integrates tribal worldviews, emphasizing harmony with nature, community, and ancestors into expressions of the

Gospel, resisting cultural erasure while affirming biblical truths.

This article explores these connections, arguing that tribal monoliths offer a culturally resonant lens for understanding Samuel's Ebenezer. In doing so, Tribal Theology enriches Christian expression by bridging ancient biblical memorials with living indigenous practices, fostering identity, liberation, and ecological spirituality among tribal Christians.

## 1. The Biblical Ebenezer: A Stone of Divine Help

The context of Ebenezer unfolds during Israel's turbulent period under Philistine oppression. After losing the Ark of the Covenant and suffering defeats, the people repent under Samuel's leadership. At Mizpah, they gather, fast, and confess their sins. When the Philistines attack, God thunders from heaven, causing confusion and enabling Israel's victory (1 Samuel 7:10-11). In response, Samuel sets up a stone between Mizpah and Shen, naming it Ebenezer to signify God's help "thus far."

This stone is not an altar for sacrifice but a memorial marker, a massebah in Hebrew tradition, evoking other biblical stones like Jacob's pillar at Bethel (Genesis 28:18) or the twelve stones at Gilgal (Joshua 4). Stones in Scripture often witness covenants, victories, or divine encounters, serving as tangible reminders for future generations. Ebenezer

encapsulates themes of repentance leading to deliverance, communal gratitude, and ongoing reliance on God. It stands as a boundary marker of hope, reminding Israel that God's help extends into the future.

## 2. Megalithic Traditions in Northeast Indian Tribal Cultures

Megalithic practices remain vibrant in Northeast India, with menhirs (upright stones), dolmens (table-like structures), and cairns erected for diverse purposes.

Among the Khasis (Meghalaya), monoliths honor the deceased post-cremation or commemorate leaders, often in alignments or with flat stones. Naga communities (especially southern groups like Angami, Chakhesang, and Konyak) link megaliths to feasts of merit, progressive ceremonies where hosts gain prestige through generosity. Feasts involve animal sacrifices, feasting, and privileges like house adornments or special shawls. The culmination often includes stone-pulling and erection of menhirs, symbolizing social ascent, clan solidarity, and communal harmony. Konyak warriors erected stones for headhunting successes or village foundations.

In Mizoram, Mizo megaliths include standing stones (lung-phum), table stones (Sikpui lung), platforms (lungdawh), and cairns (phura pachang). These mark feasts of merit (thangch-huah), village entrances, chiefly achievements, or memorials, placed along roads or courtyards for visibility and blessing. Kuki traditions feature monoliths like Damlai-Songdo for prosperity, Khomoul songphu at village gates, boundary markers, jubilee stones, and modern commemoratives (e.g., Anglo-Kuki War centenary or victims of ethnic violence).

Functionally, megaliths serve as memorials, status symbols, witnesses (judiciary), religious markers, resting seats, foundation stones, gates, or watchtowers. Pre-Christian animistic views imbued stones with spiritual potency; post-conversion (over 90% Christian among many tribes), they endure as cultural heritage, reinterpreted through Christian lenses.

### 3. Tribal Theology: Reinterpreting Indigenous Symbols

Tribal Theology in Northeast India represents a vibrant, contextual approach to Christian faith, emerging prominently since the 1970s-1980s amid postcolonial marginalization, land dispossession, cultural erosion, and socio-political struggles. Pioneered by thinkers like Wati Longchar, emerges as a “theology from below” amid marginalization, land alienation, and cultural suppression in postcolonial India. Influenced by liberation theology, it prioritizes tribal experiences oppression, community ethos, and closeness to creation to articulate Christian doctrine contextually.

Tribal Theology draws from three primary sources: biblical and Christian heritage, tribal traditional heritage (myths, rituals, ethics), and contemporary tribal experiences of oppression and resilience. It resists cultural erasure by reclaiming indigenous symbols roosters for atonement, land as divine spouse, ethical principles like communitarian love while affirming core Gospel truths without syncretism. Monoliths fit naturally here. As memorials of pivotal events and divine/spiritual favor, they parallel biblical stones. Tribal Theology reclaims them as testimonies to God’s help, transforming pre-Christian practices into Christian witnesses without syncretism.

### 4. Parallel Theological Enrichment: Ebenezer and Tribal Monoliths

The biblical Ebenezer (1 Sam 7:12) a massebah (standing stone) erected by Samuel as a memorial of God’s help “thus far” finds profound parallels in Northeast India’s megalithic traditions. Monoliths (menhirs, dolmens, cairns) among Naga, Mizo, Khasi, and Kuki tribes serve as memorials of feasts of merit, ancestral honor, warrior feats, village foundations, prosperity, or communal victories. They mark transitions from hardship to blessing, invoke blessings, preserve memory, and symbolize divine/ancestral favor.

In Tribal Theology, these monoliths are reclaimed as “Ebenezer-like” witnesses:

**Memorial function:** Ebenezer commemorates deliverance through repentance and divine thunder; tribal stones celebrate feasts of merit (generosity, provision) or battles (e.g., Anglo-Kuki War centenary), reinterpreted as testimonies to God’s sustenance and victory.

**Symbolic continuity:** Both are non-sacrificial memorials tangible reminders of gratitude and future hope. Pre-Christian animistic views (stones as spirit abodes) transform into Christian witnesses of God’s faithfulness etched in stone.

Monoliths evoke covenant remembrance, communal solidarity, and stewardship. In Christian tribal contexts, they mark revivals, conversions, or overcoming oppression echoing “thus far the Lord has helped us.” This bridges biblical memorials with living practices, enriching global Christianity with holistic, creation-centered perspectives: God’s help is concrete, communal, and ecological.

### Conclusion

Samuel’s Ebenezer and tribal monoliths converge as enduring symbols of remembrance, divine aid, and community gratitude. In Tribal Theology, they bridge biblical faith and indigenous heritage, allowing tribal Christians to express the Gospel authentically celebrating God’s help “thus far” while honouring ancestral wisdom.

This synthesis promotes inclusivity, ecological spirituality, and cultural preservation amid globalization. As monoliths continue standing in the North East India, they invite reflection: God’s help is not abstract but etched in stone, witnessed in feasts, victories, and communal life. Further exploration of evolving practices in Christian tribal communities could deepen interfaith dialogue and affirm diverse expressions of faith.



**GOD'S HELP IS NOT ABSTRACT BUT ETCHED IN STONE, WITNESSED IN FEASTS, VICTORIES, AND COMMUNAL LIFE.**



# EBENEZER:

## Remembering How God Has Helped Us

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### The Meaning of Ebenezer

In 1 Samuel 7:12, Samuel took a stone, set it up, and named it Ebenezer, saying, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.” This sentence is simple, but it is filled with faith. Samuel did not say that the stone had power. He did not tell the people to worship it. Instead, the stone helped the people remember what God had done in their lives. Faith is not only about believing for the future; it is also about remembering the past. In Tamil we say, “Idhu varaikkum Devan nammai nadathinaar” till now, God has guided us. Ebenezer teaches us to pause, look back, and recognize God’s hand in our journey.

### Israel’s Mistake: Trusting the Symbol Instead of God

Before Ebenezer was set up, Israel experienced a painful defeat at the hands of the Philistines. After the first loss, the elders asked, “Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines?” (1 Sam 4:3). This was an important question, but they did not wait for God’s answer. Instead of examining their lives, they decided to bring the Ark of the Covenant from Shiloh. They believed that if the Ark was present, victory would surely come. This was a serious misunderstanding. The Ark was holy and represented God’s presence, but

God cannot be controlled by objects or rituals. The people trusted the symbol more than obedience. Because their hearts had not changed, Israel suffered a second defeat, and the Ark was captured (1 Sam 4:10 ff). This painful moment teaches us that religious things without faithful living do not bring God’s help.

### A Change of Heart and a New Beginning

God did not abandon His people. Through Samuel, He called Israel to return with their whole heart. Samuel said, “If you are returning to the LORD with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods” (1 Sam 7:3). This time, the people listened. They fasted, confessed their sins, and prayed. There was no show of power, only humility and trust. When the Philistines attacked again, Israel depended on the LORD (YHWH) alone. Samuel prayed, and the LORD answered. God defeated the Philistines and gave Israel peace. After this victory, Samuel placed the stone and named it Ebenezer. The stone marked a new beginning. It reminded the people that even after failure, God had shown mercy and led them forward.

### Stones, Worship, and Guidance in Our Context

In the Indian context, it is common to see stones placed near trees or roads and slowly treated as gods. People begin to offer flowers and worship the stone itself. But the story of Ebenezer clearly teaches that God never wanted His people to worship a stone. The stone was never God. It was only a reminder of God’s action in history.

Think about the stones placed along highways that show the distance to a city. They are not worshiped. They simply guide travellers and show the direction. In the same way, Ebenezer was like a road sign. It showed how God had led Israel until that moment and encouraged them to continue on the right path. It was not “deivam”, but a reminder that pointed to God’s faithfulness.

### Conclusion

Ebenezer reminds us of two closely connected truths in our faith journey. First, it points us to the living presence of God, and second, it draws our attention to the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark was never meant to be understood as a mere religious object. It carried deep meaning, which is later explained clearly in the epistle writings. The message of Ebenezer teaches us that God’s presence is not something we use or control, but something we receive through faith, obedience, and trust.

The Ark of the Covenant helps us apply this message to our daily lives. In Hebrews 9:4, we are told that the Ark contained the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. These sacred items remind us that God provides for our daily needs, guides His people, and teaches them how to live according to His

will. This shows that God's presence and God's instruction always belong together. God never offers His presence without calling His people to faithful living.

This truth speaks clearly to us today. Some seek only emotional worship and spiritual experiences, while others focus mainly on teaching, rules, and knowledge. The message of Ebenezer corrects both extremes. True spiritual victory comes when we hold together both God's presence and God's teaching. When we remember how God has helped us "thus far," we gain courage to face the future with confidence. As we say in Tamil, "Devan nammai innum, inimelum nadathuvaar" the God who has led us until now will continue to lead us. Ebenezer finally invites us to live with gratitude, humility, and trust in the faithful God who walks with His people.

## The Witness of the Stone

A stone where faith and history meet,  
In human failure's shadow,  
God's victory is sweet.

Though time may change,  
His guiding hand will stay,  
Though wisdom grows,  
His mercy lights the way.

The past bears witness, t  
he future holds His vow,  
Ebenezer proclaims - His aid abides ever now.



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## The Stone of My Story

I walked through nights of fear and strife,  
Yet God has shaped my fragile life;  
Through every trial, tear, and test,  
I found His mercy was the best.

He held my hand through desert ways,  
Like Moses knew in wilderness days;  
When seas were high, He made them part,  
And placed His courage in my heart.

He gave me strength, as David found,  
When giants mocked and shook the ground;  
He tuned my lips to sing His song,  
And made my trembling spirit strong.

He shut the lions' mouths for me,  
As Daniel claimed His victory;  
Through fiery flames His love was near,  
Like faithful friends who knew no fear.

Like Hannah prayed, He heard my cry,  
He wiped the tears from weary eye;  
Like Ruth, He led me by His hand,  
To grace and hope, a promised land.

Like Peter, though I failed His call,  
His tender mercy covered all;  
He lifted me from shame and wrong,  
And filled my soul with saving song.

Not by my strength, nor by my name,  
But by the power of His flame;



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# EBENEZER:

## Reflections on 1 Samuel 7:12



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“Ebenezer” is a very familiar word, translated from the Hebrew phrase Eben ha-Ezer. Its literal meaning is “Stone of Help.”

### Biblical Origin

The origin of the word “Ebenezer” is found in 1 Samuel 7:12. After the Israelites were victorious over the Philistines, the prophet Samuel erected a stone and named it Ebenezer, saying, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.” This served as a memorial so that the Israelites would never forget God’s divine assistance.

### A Memorial of Grace

When we say “Ebenezer,” it serves as a reminder of God’s presence and help throughout our past. When I look back at my own life, I realize that I have come this far only through the help and guidance of the Lord. Since I began my studies at Bethel Bible College, I started with nothing and had little knowledge of what was to come. I have never had any full sponsorship to support my studies, yet God has taken full responsibility for my theological journey, providing for all my needs until this day. Truly, God is my Rock and my true Helper (Ebenezer). Hallelujah!

### A Confirmation of Faith

Ebenezer is a confirmation of Faith. When we face difficulties and failures, it strengthens our faith to know that the God who has helped us thus far will surely help us in the future. Even when we are faced with great suffering or journeying on difficult paths, we are not overcome. He stretches out His comforting hand and continually helps us overcome our pain. Our Ebenezer is truly with us.

### Freedom from Trouble

Just as the Israelites gained freedom from their enemies, those of us who believe in Him also have testimonies of overcoming various difficulties through God’s power.

In today’s context, the word “Ebenezer” is not only a name for a church; we use it in our individual lives as a declaration of thanksgiving. Whether a year has passed or a specific work has been successfully completed, we always proclaim God’s power by saying “Ebenezer.”

### Conclusion

Ebenezer is not only a reminder of the past but also a source of hope and faith for the future. Let us always “set up a stone” of God’s help in the midst of the failures and sorrows we face. Let us continue our journey forward with the words: “Thus far the Lord has helped us.” May the Lord bless every one of you.

**EBENEZER IS NOT ONLY A REMINDER OF THE PAST, BUT A SOURCE OF HOPE AND FAITH FOR THE FUTURE.**

# EBENEZER:

## Thus far the Lord has Helped Us



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The Bible says in 1Samuel 7:12 that Samuel took a stone and placed it between Mizpah and Jeshanah. He named it Ebenezer, saying, Thus far the Lord has helped us. At that time, Israel did not have a king. After Moses and Joshua, God appointed Samuel as their leader, judge, and prophet. Samuel guided the people in God's ways and encouraged them to turn away from false gods and serve the Lord alone.

The people gathered at Mizpah to repent of their sins and dedicate themselves to God. They came without weapons, trusting only in God. When the Philistines heard about this gathering, they saw it as a good chance to attack Israel. The Philistines were well-armed and strong. When Israel heard that the enemy was coming, they became afraid. They went to Samuel and said, "Please pray to the Lord for us, so that He may save us."

Samuel offered a sacrifice to God and cried out in prayer for the people. While he was praying, the Philistines were already approaching. Humanly speaking, Israel had no strength to fight. But God answered Samuel's prayer. Suddenly, the Lord sent loud thunder from heaven. The sound confused and frightened the

Philistines. They were thrown into panic and were defeated. Israel, though weak and unarmed, won the battle through God's power.

This victory did not come from human strength. It came from God alone. When Samuel saw what God had done, he placed a stone and named it Ebenezer, which means "Stone of Help." It was a reminder that God had helped them until that day.

This place was important because Israel and the Philistines had fought there before, and Israel had lost badly. Once, the Philistines even captured the Ark of God. But now, because God helped them Israel was victorious.

### The Power of Prayer

God listened to Samuel's prayer and acted immediately. Even at the last moment, when the enemy was near, prayer became stronger than weapons. When God moves in response to prayer, no power can stand against Him. Because Samuel prayed, God protected His people and gave them victory.

Today, we also face many spiritual battles. We struggle with sin, fear, weakness, and problems in our lives. Sometimes we feel helpless and unable to solve them by ourselves. Like Samuel, we must cry out to God in prayer. When we cannot speak properly, when we feel weak and confused, we should still come to God and ask for his help. We should never give up praying. When we pray with faith, God will help us in His time.

### God's Faithfulness

Even though the Israelites had sinned and followed false gods, God did not abandon them. When they repented and returned to Him, He forgave them and helped them again. In the same way, we are not perfect. The Bible says that no one is completely righteous. We often fail into sin.

But God is still faithful. He is full of love and restores us when we come to Him with a sincere heart. God wants to protect us, guide us, and bless us more than we deserve. There is no one who loves us more than our God.

### My Personal Testimony

When I look back at my life, I can truly say, "Thus far the Lord has helped me." God has guided me, protected me, and blessed me in many ways. He has been with me in difficult times and in joyful times. Because of this, I want to place an "Ebenezer stone" in my heart as a reminder of God's faithfulness. I choose to trust God and live by faith all my life.

May we also remember God's help in our lives and always say with thankful hearts:

"Ebenezer: Thus far the Lord has helped us."

# THE STONE OF HELP: Christ All Along

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## Scattered Stones

Stones appear frequently in the biblical narrative, often unnoticed and ordinary until particular moments when they are gathered, lifted, or struck. Scripture records altars built from stones, markers raised to remember divine intervention, and rocks that release life-giving water. These stones are not merely symbolic objects; they participate in a deeper theological story. Through them, God's presence and help are disclosed within history. When read christologically, these stone narratives reveal a striking continuity: the stone of help was Christ all along.

## Ebenezer Raised

Among these stones stands Ebenezer, raised by Samuel in 1 Samuel 7. The name means "stone of help," accompanied by the confession, "Thus far the Lord has helped us." This stone is often understood as a memorial to past victory. Yet its context suggests something more complex. Israel is still vulnerable, surrounded by uncertainty, and aware of its own failure. Ebenezer is raised not at the end of struggle, but in the midst of fear and repentance. It marks not triumph, but dependence.

## Gathered Altars

Ebenezer becomes part of a larger

pattern. Throughout Scripture, stones are gathered to mark encounters with God. Abraham builds altars from stones already present on the land (Gen. 12:7–8). Jacob sets up a stone at Bethel only after realizing that God was already there (Gen. 28:16–18). In these moments, stones do not summon God's presence; they acknowledge it. What is gathered and lifted reveals what was already present.

If Christ is the Word through whom all things were made (John 1:3), then these stones are not neutral matter later assigned meaning. They exist within Christ's sustaining presence. The act of building an altar or raising a stone is not the creation of holiness, but the recognition of divine nearness.

## Struck Rock

This recognition becomes clearer in the wilderness narrative of Exodus 17. Israel, thirsty and fearful, questions whether the Lord is truly among them. God commands Moses to strike the rock, and water flows out to sustain the people. This rock is not preserved as a memorial; it is wounded so that life may continue.

The New Testament later refuses to treat this episode as mere history. Paul states plainly, "They drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4). Paul does not say the rock symbolized Christ; he identifies the rock as Christ. Long before the incarnation, Christ was

present as sustainer, bearing the needs of the people and releasing life through suffering.

## Rejected Stone

The stone Samuel lifts is not merely pointing forward to Christ; it is recognizing Christ's help already at work. "Thus far the Lord has helped us" becomes a confession of continuity rather than closure.

The New Testament brings this theology to clarity. Jesus identifies himself as the stone rejected by the builders that becomes the cornerstone (Ps. 118:22; Matt. 21:42). The stone once lifted as help is now rejected as threat. Christ, present in altars, markers, and wilderness rocks, is finally named and refused. He is struck again, this time on the cross. Yet the pattern remains unchanged: life flows from what is wounded.

## Living Witness

Peter later describes Christ as the living stone and declares that believers themselves are "living stones" being built into a spiritual house (1 Pet. 2:4–5). What was once scattered is now gathered not into monuments, but into a community formed in Christ. The imagery shifts from memory to presence, from stone markers to living witness.

If Christ is the true Stone of Help, then those who are joined to him inevitably participate in his work. Believers do not become the source of help; Christ alone remains that foundation. Yet, lives shaped by Christ can become markers of his faithfulness. In this sense, Christian existence itself becomes a form of Ebenezer not replacing Christ, but pointing to him.

Just as the Ebenezer stone stood silently and testified to divine help, a life rooted in Christ becomes a place where others may recognize God's mercy. Such lives do not draw attention to themselves. They simply stand within the struggles of others and allow a quiet confession to emerge: "Here, God helped."

### Finally

The biblical stones is not a collection of disconnected symbols pointing vaguely toward a future truth. It is a continuous revelation of one presence moving through history. Stones were gathered into altars, lifted as markers, and struck to give life not because stone itself is sacred, but because Christ was already there. Ebenezer stands as a witness to this reality. The stone of help was Christ all along.

## Ebenezer is My Strength

I can do everything through Christ,  
the Cornerstone,  
Through the strength I can find in Him alone.  
My Ebenezer, Who holds the future and the past.

In every trial, in every test,  
In Him, my weary soul finds rest.  
For through His power, and His grace,  
I run with joy the narrow race.



**Philemon Sang**

BD-II

## My Ebenezer, The Stone of My Help

My spirit finds in You a helping hand,  
No more to fear, for victory is near.  
The Lord has come to bless this weary land,  
And quiet every doubt, and every tear.  
He lifted me from slander's cold embrace,  
From whispered lies that sought to do me harm.  
My Ebenezer, marked by saving grace,  
A trade of peace, a shield, a holy charm.  
My soul, once weak, now longs for You alone,  
To reach the height where all  
Your mercies dwell.  
My strength, my hope, a cornerstone,  
The song of grace that Your great glories tell.  
So praise the Lord, my rock, my victory,  
The stone of help, forever helping me.

Upon my soul, a fortress stands so high,  
And fear no more, for help has come to rest.  
A great design now fills the open sky,  
And lifts my heart to put me to the test.  
The Lord has freed me from the viper's tongue,  
Whose venom sought to tear and maim my peace.  
My Ebenezer, now a hymn is sung,  
A trade of grace that gives my soul release.  
My spirit, like a desert, longs for rain,  
To climb the peaks where living waters flow.  
My strength, a river breaking from its chain,  
A stone of help to make my spirit glow.  
With every breath, a fervent prayer will rise,  
His victory's light reflected in my eyes.



**Nuam Sian Lun**

BD-III

# REMEMBERING GOD'S HELP IN FAILURES:

## Reflections from Matthew 14: 22–33

YESUPOGU SARATHBABU

BD-IV



### Introduction:

The word Ebenezer comes from two Hebrew words: Eben (אֶבֶן)- (stone) and Ezer (עֵזֶר)- (help). Together, they mean “Stone of Help.” In 1 Samuel 7:12, after God gave Israel victory over the Philistines, Samuel set up a stone and named it Ebenezer, saying, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.” This stone became a memorial of God’s faithfulness, reminding the people that their survival and success were not because of their strength, but because of God’s grace.

Ebenezer was not only a physical stone; it was a spiritual symbol. It represented remembrance, gratitude, dependence, and trust. It taught Israel to look back at God’s help and move forward with faith. In the New Testament, this idea reaches its fullness in Jesus Christ. Christ Himself becomes our living Ebenezer- the eternal Stone of Help (1 Peter 2:6). Unlike the Old Testament memorial stone, which stood in one place, Jesus walks with His people forever. He is not a temporary helper but a permanent Savior.

The story of Peter walking on water in Matthew 14:28–31 reflects this truth beautifully. In this passage, we see Peter’s faith rise, fall, cry out, and be restored. His experience becomes a

living Ebenezer, showing how God helps His people in weakness. Through Peter’s journey, we learn that our confidence, dependence, and assurance must be rooted in Christ alone.

### Background: -

Throughout Scripture, God’s people were encouraged to build memorials to remember His works. Abraham built altars (Genesis 12:7), Jacob set up pillars (Genesis 28:18), and Samuel raised the Ebenezer stone (1 Samuel 7:12). These physical reminders kept Israel from forgetting God’s grace. Memory played a theological role in shaping faith. Forgetting God led to disobedience, while remembering Him led to worship.

In the Old Testament, Ezer (help) is often used for God Himself. Psalm 121:2 says, “My help comes from the Lord.” Israel’s theology was built on the truth that salvation belongs to God alone. Human strength was never sufficient. Victory, provision, and protection always came from Yahweh.

In the New Testament, Jesus fulfills this theme. He becomes the ultimate Help of humanity. Hebrews 4:16 says we can approach Him for “help in time of need.” He is the cornerstone, the foundation, and the living stone (Ephesians 2:20). The temporary Ebenezer stone finds its eternal meaning in Christ.

Peter’s experience on the sea reflects this continuity. Like Israel, Peter begins with

confidence, falls into fear, cries for help, and receives deliverance. His story shows that Jesus is the permanent Ebenezer who stands with believers in every storm.

### I. BROKEN CONFIDENCE - “I CANNOT STAND ALONE” (Matthew 14:28–29)

Peter was known for his boldness and courage. He often spoke quickly and acted fearlessly. When Jesus walked on water, Peter immediately responded, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come.” This shows his spiritual enthusiasm and confidence. He trusted Jesus enough to leave the boat and step onto the waves. As long as his eyes were fixed on Christ, he experienced the impossible.

However, his faith was mixed with self-confidence. Peter did not yet understand his own weakness. When he looked at Jesus, he walked. When he looked at the storm, he sank. Fear entered his heart. His focus shifted from divine power to human limitation. His confidence collapsed.

This reveals an important theological truth: faith that depends on self is fragile. Jeremiah 17:5 warns, “Cursed is the one who trusts in man.” Proverbs 3:5 commands us to trust in

the Lord fully. Peter learned that spiritual success cannot be sustained by human strength.

In this passage, the boat represents human security, comfort, and control. The sea represents uncertainty, suffering, and risk. Stepping out means trusting God beyond visible support. Sinking means returning to self-dependence. Many believers start their journey with enthusiasm but struggle when trials come. God allows weakness to teach humility.

This becomes the first Ebenezer in Peter's life: the realization that without Christ, he cannot stand.

## II. BLESSED DEPENDENCE – “LORD, SAVE ME” (Matthew 14:30)

When Peter began to sink, he did not pretend to be strong. He did not attempt to save himself. Instead, he cried out, “Lord, save me.” This short prayer reveals deep theology. It is a prayer of surrender, repentance, and faith.

Throughout Scripture, God responds to such cries. Jonah prayed from the fish (Jonah 2:2). Israel cried in Egypt (Exodus 2:23). David prayed for mercy (Psalm 51:10). These prayers show that God listens to broken hearts.

Peter accepted his weakness. He stopped trusting himself and turned fully to Christ. Dietrich Bonhoeffer rightly said, “Only the one who cries to God in weakness truly knows God's grace.” When pride died, grace flowed.

Theologically, this reflects the doctrine of grace. Salvation is not earned by effort but received by faith. Ephesians 2:8 declares that we are saved by grace. Peter's rescue was not based on his walking ability but on his humble crying.

True spiritual maturity is not self-sufficiency but God-dependence. This is the second Ebenezer: remembering that our strength comes through surrender.

## III. BLESSED ASSURANCE – “I AM HELD” (Matthew 14:31)

The Bible says that Jesus immediately reached out His hand and caught Peter. Grace was instant. Jesus did not wait for Peter to improve. He saved him first and corrected him later. Love came before discipline.

This reflects God's character. Isaiah 41:10 promises, “I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” John 10:28 assures that no one can snatch believers from Christ's hand. God's hand symbolizes protection, covenant, and faithfulness.

Peter was not saved because he held Jesus. He was saved

He was saved because Jesus held him. This is central to Christian theology. Our security is not based on our faithfulness but on God's faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22 reminds us that His mercies never fail.

After Jesus rescued Peter, He brought him back to the boat. The storm stopped. Worship followed. Failure turned into faith. Fear turned into praise. God used Peter's weakness to deepen his relationship with Him.

This is the third Ebenezer: the assurance that we are always held by Christ.

### Conclusion:-

Samuel's stone declared, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.” Peter's rescue declared, “The Lord is still helping us.” In Jesus Christ, this help becomes eternal. He is our living Ebenezer, our Rock, our Savior, and our Sustainer.

Peter's journey from confidence to fear, from fear to prayer, and from prayer to assurance reflects every believer's journey. We fall, we cry, and we are lifted. Our faith grows not through perfection but through grace.

Unlike the temporary stone in Israel, Christ never fades. He walks with us in every storm. He lifts us in every fall. He holds us in every weakness.

Therefore, let our lives proclaim: “Thus far, and forever, the Lord has helped us.” Let Christ be our permanent Ebenezer—today, tomorrow, and forever. Amen.

**PETER WAS NOT SAVED BECAUSE HE HELD JESUS—HE WAS SAVED BECAUSE JESUS HELD HIM.**

# JESHURUN AND EBENEZER IN A BROKEN WORLD



SIMSON J  
BD-IV

Every day, people around the world wake up with quiet questions about fear, belonging, and survival. News reports constantly speak of economic inequality, social unrest, environmental destruction, political conflict, and spiritual emptiness. Beneath these visible problems lie deeper struggles within individuals and societies. Many people live with anxiety, uncertainty, and a loss of purpose. Communities are weakening, trust is fading, and political systems often create more division than stability. In such a fragile world, the question is not only how societies can survive, but how people can understand who they truly are in the middle of constant change. In this context, the Old Testament themes of Jeshurun and Ebenezer offer meaningful insights into identity, memory, responsibility, and hope.

Jeshurun is a poetic name for Israel found in Deuteronomy and Isaiah. It describes a community called to live uprightly before God. This calling is not about being morally perfect, but about living responsibly within a relationship with God. From a psychological point of view, identity is very important. When people lack a clear sense of who they are, they often feel insecure, confused, or even

aggressive. Jeshurun offers an identity based not on competition or success, but on belonging and accountability. Such an identity can give people inner stability, especially during times of uncertainty.

From a sociological perspective, Jeshurun challenges identities shaped by caste, class, race, or economic power. Like modern societies, ancient Israel was tempted to define itself through strength and success. Jeshurun resists this temptation by grounding identity in covenant rather than control. Today, identity politics often increases division by focusing only on differences. Jeshurun points instead to a shared responsibility, calling communities to justice, care for one another, and ethical living. It reminds society that identity without responsibility can easily lead to exclusion and conflict.

The statement in Deuteronomy 33:26 that there is no god like the God of Jeshurun also has political meaning. It limits blind loyalty to human authorities. It challenges the idea that the state, the market, or any ideology deserves ultimate allegiance. When political systems demand unquestioned obedience, they often silence conscience and harm the vulnerable. Jeshurun reminds communities that power must serve justice, dignity, and life, not domination.

The setting of Jeshurun before Israel enters the Promised Land highlights another important lesson. Times of change and

lead to forgetting important values. History shows that economic growth does not always bring moral or social improvement. Jeshurun warns that prosperity without responsibility weakens communities. It calls people to humility, ethical awareness, and continued dependence on God, especially when life becomes easier.

Ebenezer comes from a different experience. In 1 Samuel 7:12, after defeat and renewal, Israel sets up a stone to remember God's help. Psychologically, memory plays a key role in healing and strength. Communities that ignore their past suffering often repeat harmful patterns. Ebenezer encourages honest remembrance—acknowledging pain while recognizing survival as meaningful. This kind of memory strengthens identity and resilience.

Sociologically, shared memories shape how communities understand themselves. Public remembrance through stories, symbols, and rituals builds common values. Ebenezer does not celebrate victory over others, but gratitude for help received. In societies recovering from violence, disaster, or injustice, remembering moments of support and solidarity can rebuild trust and unity.

prosperity can lead to forgetting important values. History shows that economic growth does not always bring moral or social improvement. Jeshurun warns that prosperity without responsibility weakens communities. It calls people to humility, ethical awareness, and continued dependence on God, especially when life becomes easier. Ebenezer points beyond this thinking by reminding societies that stability is fragile and that humility matters. Leaders who forget this often misuse power and increase suffering.

When Jeshurun and Ebenezer are read together, they offer a balanced vision of life. Jeshurun speaks about identity and responsibility, while Ebenezer speaks about memory and gratitude. Psychologically, this combination helps people find purpose without pride and hope without ignoring pain. Sociologically, it encourages communities to stay faithful to shared values while honoring their history. Politically, it resists both despair and arrogance, calling for leadership shaped by justice and humility.

Today, people are often valued by productivity, political loyalty, or social visibility. This creates pressure, exclusion, and exhaustion. Jeshurun challenges this by affirming human dignity based on calling rather than performance. At the same time, Ebenezer speaks to communities tired of crisis, reminding them that endurance itself has meaning and that hope grows through remembrance.

From the themes of Jeshurun and Ebenezer offer a rich yet accessible theological response to the struggles of the modern world. They speak to psychology, sociology, and politics while remaining deeply spiritual. Together, they remind communities who they are, how they have survived, and how they are called to live responsibly today. In an anxious and divided world, this vision offers a path toward healing, justice, and faithful hope.

“

**JESHURUN AND EBENEZER REMIND COMMUNITIES WHO THEY ARE, HOW THEY HAVE SURVIVED, AND HOW THEY ARE CALLED TO LIVE RESPONSIBLY TODAY.**

”

## Ebenezer

My mother barren, years were long,  
She sought the idols, prayers were wrong.  
But gospel came—“Ask Christ, receive,”  
By grace of God she did believe.

Inside her womb, my life began,  
Though father’s will was not God’s plan.  
A bitter cup, a pill of strife,  
Yet Jesus saved and gave me life.

One year—thrown out, left to die,  
Two years—the wheel rolled where I lie.  
In fourth the current struck my hand,  
But God still kept me by His plan.

After thirteen, I turned aside,  
In sin and shame I chose to hide.  
Yet in the chains of lust and night,  
He broke the dark and gave me light.

So here I raise my Ebenezer,  
God my Helper, Christ my Redeemer.  
Through every trial my heart can say,  
The Lord has carried me all the way.



**Telukala Sameel**  
BD-O

# GOD OUR INVISIBLE HELPER: Trusting His Help Through Life's Storms



Ezakel  
BD-III

## Introduction

As we begin a new year, a new ministry, or a new season of life, we encounter questions, fears, and our own limitations. We move forward with careful planning, education, experience, and available resources, believing that preparation will secure our future. Yet life has a way of reminding us that even our best efforts are limited. Sudden storms loss, illness, failure, conflict, or deep uncertainty can rise without warning and shake our confidence. At such moments, Scripture gently redirects our focus and calls us to a deeper trust:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

## Trusting God Beyond Human Wisdom

Human nature urges us to depend on what we can see, calculate, and control. When situations become uncertain or impossible, fear often replaces faith. Yet throughout Scripture, God calls His people to trust Him beyond visible circumstances.

offers a powerful illustration of this truth. In 1853, while sailing to China, Taylor’s ship drifted helplessly toward dangerous rocks after the wind suddenly died. The captain, relying on experience and reason, believed destruction was unavoidable. Taylor, however, knelt in prayer, trusting in God’s intervention. Soon after, a strong wind arose and turned the ship away from disaster.

This incident teaches a vital lesson: human wisdom sees limits, but faith sees God. When life declares, “There is no way,” God reminds us that He is still in control. Trust begins where human understanding ends.

## Placing Our Burdens into God’s Hands

Worry blocks God’s help. We often carry burdens that God never intended us to bear alone. Trust deepens when we intentionally surrender our fears, concerns, and unanswered questions to Him.

Abraham and Sarah struggled with this truth. God promised them a child, yet as years passed, hope faded. When Sarah overheard that she would conceive in her old age, she laughed in disbelief. God responded with a question that still challenges believers today: “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” (Genesis 18:14). God fulfilled His promise and gave them Isaac, demonstrating that divine power is never limited by human weakness. When we stop measuring God by our circumstances, His help becomes visible in unexpected and transformative ways.

## Trusting God in the Midst of Life’s Storms

Storms are unavoidable in life. The question is not whether they will come, but how we will respond when they do. Acts 27 records the apostle Paul’s perilous journey by sea. A violent storm raged for days, and all hope of survival seemed lost.

Yet Paul remained calm. God sent an angel to assure him that everyone on board would survive. With confidence, Paul declared, “I believe God, that it will be just as it was told me” (Acts 27:25). Because Paul trusted God and followed His guidance, every life was spared.

This account reminds us that faith does not deny storms—it stands firm within them. When we trust God in crisis, fear loses its authority, and hope is restored.

## Following God’s Guidance Day by Day

God’s help is not reserved only for moments of crisis, it is meant for daily life. The Israelites’ journey through the wilderness illustrates this beautifully. For forty years, God guided them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. “Whenever the cloud was taken up... the Israelites set out” (Exodus 40:36).

They did not always know their destination, but obedience ensured protection and provision. Today, God continues to guide His people—not through visible signs, but through His Word, prayer, godly counsel, and the quiet prompting of the Holy Spirit. Daily obedience opens the path for divine direction.

### Standing Secure on the Rock of Salvation

A Buddhist once said to me, “The idea of needing a Savior fits perfectly for freeloaders and lazy people.” I replied that the greed, anger, and ignorance identified by the Buddha cannot be avoided at all times. As beings inseparably bound to sin, how can we save ourselves? Is Jesus the Only Savior? , written by Ronald H. Nash raises questions “Is there salvation in other religions and second chances after death?” Yet Jesus declares, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the father except through me ”( John 14:6).

Let us look at the conditions of the world today. In a world marked by instability wars, disasters, disease, and moral confusion true security is found only in God. Scripture repeatedly refers to Him as the Rock of our salvation.

Dwelling in God’s presence through prayer, Scripture, worship, fasting, and obedience strengthens our spiritual foundation. Faith becomes resilient when rooted in a living relationship with God. As the psalmist declares, “The Lord lives! He is my Rock and my salvation” (2 Samuel 22:47). Though storms may shake us, when Christ is our foundation, we remain unshaken and secure.

### Looking to Our Ever-Present Helper

Psalms 121 offers deep comfort to weary hearts. The psalmist asks, “From where does my help come?” and answers with confidence:

“My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.”

God is not a distant observer. He neither sleeps nor grows weary. His protection is constant—by day and by night, at home and on the journey. The Creator of the universe faithfully watches over His people.

### Conclusion

Are you facing uncertainty, fear, or struggle today? Lift your eyes beyond your circumstances and fix them on the Lord. Trust His guidance, surrender your worries, and walk in obedience.

God’s help may be invisible, but it is never absent. Those who dwell in His presence and rely on His promises will experience His guidance, protection, and peace—now and forever. Hold fast to this truth: God is our unseen guide, and His help never fails.

## The Ebenezer Milestone

A stone reminds me I am not alone  
 When I am passing through the long dark night  
 Your presence fills me with new strength  
 Your words are my courage to face another day  
 All my whole life long  
 You protect me and help me  
 And You rescue me from danger with Thy blood  
 His crucifixion and resurrection is His victory  
 And also His victory is my milestone  
 Here I am learning and present  
 Because of only Thy Ebenezer  
 Who initiates and helps to start a new chapter of  
 my life journey in a new environment  
 Leading and guiding with Your love even when  
 I am unaware of it sometimes  
 How great is Your grace,  
 not because of my goodness  
 But because of Your goodness  
 Your everlasting and selfless love on me  
 Indescribable love on me  
 May Your name be glorified  
 through the whole world!



**Vung Khat Huai**

BD-III

# A DALIT CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON EBENEZER: A Never-Ending Quest or an Answer?



KAMBHAM RICHIE JOHN SUHETH

BD-III

## Introduction

The word Ebenezer comes from the Hebrew expression Even 'ha-ezer', meaning "the stone of help," found in 1 Samuel 7:12, where the prophet Samuel sets up a memorial stone and declares, "Thus far the Lord has helped us." The stone served as a reminder of God's help and faithfulness during Israel's struggle against the Philistines. Ebenezer shows God's presence, and help in times of fear and struggle. This article is an attempt to explore Ebenezer from a Dalit Christian perspective, connecting the biblical memory of God's help with the ongoing struggles of Dalits and Dalit Christians. It also considers whether Ebenezer is a never-ending quest for God's help or an answer already present in their lived faith and resilience.

## 1. Ebenezer

### 1.1. Biblical Understanding

The term Ebenezer got a lot of significance in 1 Samuel 7:12, where it is mentioned as a memorial for God's help during Israel's struggle with the Philistines. At that time, there seemed to be no hope that Israel could defeat the Philistines, but Samuel called the people to repent from their past ways. The people gathered at Mizpah, as Samuel had commanded, and when the Philistines came to

attack, the Lord struck them and gave victory to Israel. The stone of Ebenezer stood as a reminder of God's help, a symbol of His faithfulness, and a witness to His power amid Israel's fear and struggles.

### 1.2. Theological Significance

Ebenezer carries deep theological significance because it expresses the relationship between God and His people in times of weakness and struggle. It shows that God is not distant but actively involved in human history, especially when His people turn to Him in repentance and faith. The memorial stone set up by Samuel was not only a physical reminder but also a spiritual declaration that Israel's strength and victory came from God alone. It teaches dependence on God rather than human power and reminds believers that God's help often comes when hope seems lost. Ebenezer also connects memory with faith, because remembering God's past help strengthens trust in His future guidance. Thus, Ebenezer becomes a symbol of God's continuing presence, faithfulness, and saving action in the lives of His people.

## 2. Dalits and Dalit Christians

### 2.1. A Brief History

In the history, Dalits were the ones who were the most oppressed, marginalized, and labelled as "untouchables." The caste system made a strong social division where Dalits were forced to do low and degrading work and were denied to get education, property ownership, temple entry, and a normal social

living. Because of this, they lived with social rejection, poverty, and loss of dignity. In different periods of history, many reform movements took place, and through Christian mission many Dalits received hope and a sense of dignity in their lives. In present-day society, even though the Constitution says untouchability is abolished and equality is given, many Dalits still face injustice and discrimination. Their history, therefore, is not only a story of suffering but also a continuing struggle for dignity, justice, and basic human rights.

### 2.2. Present-day Struggle

Even today, Dalits face many challenges in their daily lives. Even though some Dalits have become well educated and made progress in society, a large number still face discrimination, violence, and injustice. Dalit Christians, in particular, experience even more struggles, often feeling left out and marginalized even within their communities. These daily challenges affect not only their social and economic life but also their sense of dignity and belonging. In such moments, the concept of Ebenezer carries a powerful message for their lives of struggle and hope, reminding them that God's help and presence remain with them.

### 3. A Dalit Christian Perspective of Ebenezer

#### 3.1. Ebenezer as God's Intervention in the Troubled Times

From a Dalit Christian perspective, Ebenezer represents God's intervention in their troubled times. When fear surrounds them, injustice strikes, and life pushes them to the margins, Ebenezer stands firm, showing God's presence even in the hardest moments. It reminds them that they are not alone in their struggles and that God's help is real and active, offering hope, courage, and strength when life feels overwhelming.

#### 3.2. Ebenezer as a Reminder of God's Help

Ebenezer itself means "the stone of help," and for the Israelites, this help came in their near-to-death moments, showing that God never abandons His people and that His constant support sustains them. In the same way, for Dalits who continue to face injustice, social discrimination, and are forced to do menial work that no one else wants, Ebenezer reminds them that God is their constant help. Even when everyone else rejects them, God stands with them, cares for them, and provides strength and support in their struggles.

#### 3.3. Jesus as the Ebenezer

From a Dalit Christian perspective, Jesus is the liberator who lived and identified himself with the oppressed and the outcasts during his time. He came to liberate the people of His time from the bondages of oppression and social disorder. He stands as Ebenezer for all the socially deprived, challenging the dominating social order and showing God's care for the marginalized. Just like Ebenezer stood in the midst of the Israelites, through Jesus, Dalits find hope, strength, and a reminder that God is always with those who are rejected and oppressed.

### 4. Ebenezer as an Answer to Dalit Struggles

There is still a question that remains – whether Ebenezer is a never-ending quest for God's help or an answer for the struggles of the Dalits? Ebenezer is not just a memory of God's past help but also an answer to their ongoing struggles. It reminds them that God is present in their daily lives, giving strength, courage, and hope even when they face injustice, discrimination, and social rejection. Ebenezer shows that God does not abandon His people and that His help is real, practical, and sustaining. In the midst of poverty, marginalization, and oppression, Dalits can rely on God as their constant support, finding dignity and resilience through faith. Ebenezer, therefore, becomes a sign that God's presence is an answer to their long-standing struggles and a source of encouragement to keep moving forward.

#### Conclusion

Ebenezer, the "stone of help" reminds all the struggled and oppressed Dalits that God's help is not just in the past but is

present in their daily struggles with injustice, discrimination, and social marginalization. Through Ebenezer, they see that God is faithful, caring, and actively involved in their lives, giving strength, courage, and hope. Jesus, as the Ebenezer, shows that God identifies with the oppressed and provides liberation, dignity, and support. Whether it is seen as a never-ending quest or a present answer, Ebenezer reassures that God's presence and help are real, making faith a source of resilience, hope, and transformation in the face of ongoing struggles.

## Ebenezer, My Sweet Stone

Little heart, don't feel afraid,  
There's a special stone that won't let you stray.  
Ebenezer, soft and bright,  
Whispers love and holds me tight.

When the world feels big and wide,  
I know I'm safe with God by my side.  
Every smile, every gentle prayer,  
Is a reminder He's always there.

Thank you, Ebenezer, for your light,  
For helping me through dark to bright.  
With a thankful heart, I softly say,  
You guide me gently every day.

Your quiet strength helps me believe,  
In every dream I can achieve.  
With you, my heart feels calm and free,  
A special gift just meant for me.



**Ngun Len Tial**

BD - III

# THUS FAR AND FOREVER: Christ Our Living Ebenezer



POOTHI SAMUEL BENNY  
BD-III

Human beings have consistently preserved moments that have shaped their existence. Communities created symbols and narratives to remember encounters that transformed fear into hope and weakness into strength. The word Ebenezer emerged from Israel's experience following repentance and divine intervention, when a stone was set up to mark deliverance and acknowledge the Lord's help (1 Samuel 7:12). This act functioned not merely as a historical record but as an existential confession, anchoring memory within faith.

Throughout Scripture, encounters with God are intentionally remembered and interpreted. After crossing the Red Sea, Israel responded with a song celebrating God's saving power rather than with abstract reflection (Exodus 15). Jacob, recognizing that his life had been preserved by divine grace, named the place of his encounter Peniel (Genesis 32:30). In the wilderness, water flowing from the rock became a sign of God's sustaining presence amid human desperation (Exodus 17:6). Such events formed a dynamic theology rooted in lived experience. As Israel's history unfolded, a consistent pattern became evident: when human resources failed, divine intervention

emerged. Confidence gradually shifted from military strength to reliance upon God's faithfulness (Psalm 20:7). The prophets continually reminded the people that true deliverance was found not in political alliances or material wealth, but in returning to the Lord (Isaiah 30:15). This developing understanding prepared the way for God's ultimate act of salvation in history.

The life and ministry of Jesus embodied this longstanding narrative of divine assistance. He ministered among the broken, healed the sick, restored dignity to the marginalized, and proclaimed freedom to the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19). Each action reflected the same divine compassion evident throughout Israel's story. The cross, however, revealed the most profound expression of divine succor. Humanity's deepest crisis, alienation from God through sin, was confronted as Christ fully entered into human suffering to reconcile the world to God (2 Corinthians 5:19). The resurrection then transformed despair into enduring hope, just as earlier acts of deliverance had transformed Israel's fear into faith (Matthew 28:6). What had once been symbolized by a stone was now permanently inscribed in history through the empty tomb. Divine help was no longer occasional but eternally present in the risen Christ.

The early Church lived in light of this reality. In the face of persecution, imprisonment, and death, believers placed

their trust in the sustaining presence of Christ rather than in worldly power (Acts 4:29-31). Many martyrs endured suffering with confidence that the grace received in Christ surpassed all affliction (Romans 8:35-39). During periods of widespread plague in the Roman Empire, Christians cared for the sick who had been abandoned by others, convinced that both life and death rested in the hands of a faithful God.

This same trust continued to shape Christian history across centuries. Reformers confronted corruption not solely through human resolve but through reliance on God's steadfast faithfulness. Missionaries ventured across continents amid danger and disease, repeatedly bearing witness to divine provision and protection. In the Indian context, countless believers from marginalized communities encountered hope and dignity through faith in Christ, often depending upon God rather than social structures to endure suffering and injustice.

In contemporary life, faith likewise grows through lived encounters. Families delivered from crisis, individuals restored from despair, and communities strengthened through prayer quietly echo the ancient confession that help comes from the

Lord (Psalm 121:1-2). These experiences become living testimonies transmitted across generations. Memory within faith serves not as nostalgia but as spiritual formation. Scripture repeatedly calls God's people to remember His works so that trust may be strengthened amid present challenges (Deuteronomy 8:2; Psalm 77:11-12). Human identity is shaped by remembered experience, while spiritual identity is formed through recollection of divine faithfulness. Such remembrance nurtures gratitude and sustains hope.

The permanence of Christ provides these experiences with enduring significance. Scripture portrays Him as the cornerstone rejected yet established by God (Psalm 118:22; 1 Peter 2:6). Paul identifies Christ as the spiritual rock that accompanied Israel in the wilderness and sustained them through hardship (1 Corinthians 10:4). Jesus taught that a life founded upon obedience to Him remains secure amid life's storms (Matthew 7:24-25). The epistle to the Hebrews affirms that Christ remains the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). Together, these affirmations reveal a foundation that transcends time.

Such stability reshapes the believer's interpretation of life. Achievement becomes an expression of gratitude rather than pride, while suffering becomes a place of encounter rather than defeat. Both experiences offer opportunities to recognize God's sustaining presence. Divine assistance is discovered not only in extraordinary events but also within the ordinary rhythms of life. In a world marked by economic instability, social conflict, environmental crises, and personal uncertainty, the human longing for permanence remains strong. The collective experience of God's people across history testifies that genuine security is found in Christ alone. What began as a stone erected after a battlefield victory continues as a living reality within countless lives. Divine help has not diminished with time but has unfolded continuously throughout history. Confessions such as "Thus far the Lord has helped us" continue to rise from churches, homes, and hearts across the world.

Living with Christ as Ebenezer involves moving forward grounded in memory, strengthened by faith, and sustained by hope. It acknowledges that every step is upheld by grace already received and affirms that the God who acted in the past remains faithful in the present and trustworthy for the future.

## The Omnipotent God

When trials rise and shadows fall,  
The human heart seeks help in all.  
The Israelites turned their gaze astray,  
To Baal's false light, they chose to pray.

But when the Philistines drew near,  
Their gods were mute, their hope was fear.  
They sought out Samuel, bowed the knee,  
And cried to YHWH, who sets hearts free.

By faith they fought, by God they won,  
The foe was crushed, the war was done.  
A stone was raised, the name made clear:  
"Ebenezer—our God is here."

So learn, O soul, in joy or strife,  
The True God reigns, the Lord of life.  
All power is His, both near and far,  
The Omnipotent God, our guiding star.



**Christina Lian**

BD-II

# EBENEZER:

## The Impartial Stone of Help

NAMA RATNA SERUB  
BD-III



Stones in the biblical tradition are rarely inert. They speak without voices, remember without minds, and remain when human witnesses disappear. They mark crossings, covenants, grief, and gratitude. Among them stands the stone called Ebenezer, raised by Samuel after Israel's deliverance from the Philistines, bearing the inscription of memory: "Thus far the Lord has helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12). Often read as a monument of national victory, Ebenezer also invites a quieter, wider interpretation one that understands divine help not as selective or triumphant, but as impartial, attentive, and deeply personal.

Ebenezer stands between Mizpah and Shen, not merely as a geographical marker, but as a theological threshold. It is placed between fear and restoration, between vulnerability and hope. The stone does not celebrate conquest; it acknowledges dependence. Its message is modest, even restrained: not we have prevailed, but we have been helped. In this humility, Ebenezer opens space for a theology that includes those whose experiences of help are rarely carved into public memory.

### Memory That Takes Shape

To raise a stone is to insist that something must not be forgotten. Yet biblical memory is selective. Some experiences are monumentalised; others remain embedded in the fragile terrain of story and survival. Ebenezer becomes an official memory of divine intervention, authorised and visible. But the biblical narrative also preserves moments where memory is carried differently not in stone, but in naming, in encounter, in lived testimony.

Long before Samuel raised Ebenezer, a woman in the wilderness named God. Hagar's encounter in Genesis 16 unfolds far from centres of power. She is alone, displaced, and silenced within a household that benefits from her body but not her voice. When she flees into the desert, it is there not in sanctuary or assembly that she encounters the divine. Her response is striking: she names God El Roi, "the God who sees." This is not a name learned from tradition or instruction; it is born from experience. She speaks not of victory, but of visibility.

If Ebenezer declares help remembered by a community, Hagar's naming declares help recognised by an individual. One stands upright in public space; the other echoes quietly in the wilderness. Yet both testify to the same reality: God's presence emerges where human systems fail.

### The God Who Helps and Sees

Together, Ebenezer and Hagar's confession form a fuller theology of divine action. Help, in Scripture, is not confined to dramatic intervention. It is not limited to battlefields or prophetic leadership. Sometimes it appears as deliverance; at other times, as being seen in a place of abandonment.

The God who helps Israel defeat the Philistines is the same God who meets Hagar beside a spring. The difference lies not in divine availability, but in human visibility. National deliverance receives a stone; personal survival receives a name.

Ebenezer's strength lies in its restraint. It does not specify how help arrived or who deserved it. It simply acknowledges that help occurred. In this sense, the stone is impartial. It does not discriminate between forms of suffering or hierarchies of worthiness. It stands as a witness to divine attentiveness, not human achievement.

### Stones and Silences

The biblical text is attentive to voices, but also to silences. Many acts of endurance go unmarked. Many lives conclude without monuments. Yet Scripture does not suggest that these

lives are less held by God.

Hagar raises no altar of stone. She leaves no physical mark behind. Still, her naming of God becomes part of the sacred text. Her story resists erasure not through architecture, but through testimony. In this way, she offers an alternative form of remembrance one that values experience over permanence, encounter over institution.

Ebenezer, read alongside such moments, becomes less a claim of possession and more a gesture of gratitude. It does not claim God as belonging to a nation, but acknowledges dependence on grace. It does not monopolise divine help; it gestures towards it.

### The Impartial Stone

To call Ebenezer an impartial stone is to recognise that divine help is not governed by proximity to power. The stone does not ask who speaks for God or who is authorised to raise it. It simply stands between past and future, reminding all who pass that survival itself is sacred.

An impartial Ebenezer makes room for unnamed stories. It holds space for those who never returned from battle, those who waited at home, those who fled into wilderness rather than march into victory. It affirms that divine presence is not diminished in quieter narratives.

Such a reading resists triumphalism. It refuses to equate God's help solely with success or dominance. Instead, it recognises help in endurance, in being seen, in continuing to live when circumstances suggest otherwise.

### From Stone to Witness

Stones endure, but they do not speak unless interpreted. Over time, Ebenezer risks becoming a relic remembered for its name but detached from its meaning. Yet when held in conversation with other biblical testimonies, it regains its vitality.

Every act of remembrance that acknowledges dependence becomes an Ebenezer. Every moment when someone can look back and say, "I did not survive alone," participates in the theology of the stone. Help does not always alter history; sometimes it simply allows life to continue.

Like Hagar's confession, such moments often occur away from public recognition. They happen in exile, in waiting, in spaces where no stone is raised. Yet these moments are no less sacred.

### Conclusion: Thus Far

Ebenezer does not mark the end of the journey. Its words "thus far" are intentionally unfinished. They look backward with gratitude and forward with humility. The stone stands not as a declaration of arrival, but as a pause of recognition.

So, Ebenezer becomes more than a national monument. It becomes a shared witness to divine attentiveness one that includes both the public and the private, the celebrated and the overlooked.

The God who helped Israel thus far is the God who saw Hagar in the wilderness. The stone that stands between Mizpah and Shen quietly bears witness to countless other places where help occurred without recognition.

Thus far, help has been given.

Thus far, lives have been sustained.

Thus far, God has been present.

And that, perhaps, is the truest meaning of Ebenezer.

## Ebenezer: Stone of Faith

The paths You led me on now light my way,  
And in their glow I see Your hand once more;  
Your thoughts rise higher than  
our thoughts each day,  
Your wisdom greater than what we implore.  
The trials past, the failures I had known,  
You shaped into provision for my good;  
From out of loss, a seed of hope was sown,  
Your Word became my peace, my daily food.  
So I will raise my voice, my stone of praise,  
For Ebenezer shines through all my days.



**Benedict Babu**

BD-1

# EXILE ON THEIR OWN LAND:

## Ebenezer's Reflections on Kuki–Meitei Conflict



Lunxhokai Haokip

BD-III

### Introduction

Exile is generally understood as displacement from one's own homeland by a foreign power. Yet history bears witness to a more tragic form of exile 'exile within one's own land'. Such exile is not merely by physical displacement, but by the loss of security, dignity, political voice, and communal belonging. The ongoing conflict between the Kuki and Meitei communities in Manipur has tragically rendered the Kuki people strangers in the land of their ancestors. Villages have been burned, families uprooted, livelihoods destroyed, and an entire people pushed to the margins within the geographical boundaries they have long called home.

This article seeks to reflect on the Kuki–Meitei conflict through historical analysis, political critique, and theological reflection, drawing parallels with the Judahite exile in the Old Testament. By engaging Scripture, particularly the exile narratives and the theme of Ebenezer, this paper explores how suffering, injustice, divine silence, and hope intersect in both biblical history and the contemporary Kuki experience

**The Kukis in Manipur: Historical and Cultural Presence**

The Kukis are one of the indigenous tribal communities of Manipur, belonging to the larger Chin-Kuki-Mizo ethnic family. Historically, the Kukis have inhabited the hill regions of Manipur for centuries, long before the formation of the modern Indian state. Their social organization, land ownership patterns, customary laws, and village governance systems were deeply rooted in communitarian values and ancestral heritage. Land, for the Kukis, is not merely an economic resource but a theological and cultural inheritance, a sacred trust passed down through generations. Traditional Kuki identity is inseparable from village land, burial grounds, and ancestral memory. Dispossession, therefore, strikes at the heart of Kuki existence, threatening not only survival but identity itself.

Despite their indigenous status, Kukis have historically faced systemic marginalization, limited political representation, and administrative neglect. These long-standing vulnerabilities laid the groundwork for the crisis that would later erupt with devastating consequences.

### The Rise of the Kuki–Meitei Conflict

The recent escalation of violence between the Kukis and Meiteis did not emerge in a vacuum. It is the result of accumulated political tensions, ethnic anxieties, and structural inequalities. Contestations (disputations) over land rights, constitutional protections, and identity recognition intensified existing fractures between hill and valley communities.

The conflict rapidly escalated into large-scale ethnic violence, unreasonably affecting Kuki villages. Homes were destroyed, churches desecrated, and thousands displaced into relief camps. The violence transformed Kukis into internally displaced persons (IDPs), exiles without crossing borders. This form of displacement is particularly cruel because it occurs within the nation-state that claims to protect its citizens. The Kukis were not defeated by a foreign empire but by the collapse of constitutional protection and the weaponization of ethnic identity.

### Political Injustice and the Silence of the Government

One of the most painful dimensions of the Kuki experience has been the perceived silence and inaction of the government. Constitutional guarantees of equality, security, and justice appeared suspended when Kukis needed them most. Law enforcement mechanisms failed to prevent violence, protect villages, or ensure safe return. This silence is not neutral. It is politically charged. Silence in the face of injustice functions as complicity. The lack of decisive intervention has deepened the sense of abandonment among Kukis, reinforcing their experience of

of exile.

Politically, the Kukis face:

- Unequal access to justice
- Delayed or inadequate rehabilitation
- Erosion of land rights
- Absence of meaningful dialogue

A stark illustration of structural injustice is the abduction and gang rape of Kuki women in Imphal during ethnic violence in May 2023. Despite survival and pursuit of justice, delayed investigations, and sustained governmental inaction denied accountability. Her death in January 2026, widely termed a “national shame,” exposes how political silence and institutional failure culminate in irreversible human loss.

Such realities mirror what political theologians describe as structural sin, where injustice is embedded within systems rather than isolated actions.

### **Judah in Exile: Political Injustice, Divine Discipline, and Persian Intervention**

The Babylonian exile of Judah provides a profound biblical parallel. Judah’s exile was not merely a military defeat but a theological and political catastrophe. Jerusalem was destroyed, the Temple razed, and the people deported. Like the Kukis today, the Judeans experienced:

- Loss of land
- Collapse of political autonomy
- Cultural humiliation
- Religious disorientation

Yet exile did not mean divine abandonment. God raised foreign powers Persian rulers like Cyrus as instruments of liberation. The return from exile was made possible not through Judah’s strength but through unexpected political intervention aligned with divine purpose.

This narrative challenges simplistic theology. God works through secular political structures, even non-covenantal rulers, to restore justice. The Kuki struggle similarly invites reflection on how divine sovereignty may operate through governmental reform, judicial action, and international concern.

### **Theological Disparity: Judah in Exile and the Kuki Experience**

There are theological similarities and differences between Judah’s exile and the Kuki situation. Judah’s exile was interpreted by prophets as both judgment and purification, linked to covenantal disobedience. The Kuki exile, however, cannot be morally framed as divine punishment. It is an unjust suffering inflicted by human systems, not divine judgment.

Yet both experiences share:

- Lament as a theological response
- Questioning of God’s presence
- Reconfiguration of identity in suffering
- Hope beyond political collapse

The Kuki experience resonates strongly with the Psalms of Lament, where faith is not denied but expressed through protest, grief, and longing for justice.

### **Kukis’ Hope: Divine Intervention and Government Responsibility**

Hope for the Kukis functions on two inseparable levels: divine intervention and governmental responsibility. Trust in God does not diminish the demand for political accountability, rather biblical faith intensifies the call for justice from those in authority. In the midst of displacement and violence, the Kukis continue to affirm God’s sustaining presence, discovering spiritual resilience even in relief camps and ruined villages. This hope preserves dignity and identity, enabling the community to endure suffering without surrendering to despair or silence.

At the same time, Kuki hope includes the longing for the restoration of land, security, and communal dignity, recognizing that land is not merely territory but an inheritance bound to memory, culture, and life itself. Hope also demands decisive political intervention to ensure justice, protection, and equality under the law. From a biblical perspective, governing authorities are morally accountable before God, and their silence in the face of injustice constitutes a failure of vocation. Therefore, Kukis hope is inseparable from the expectation that constitutional promises will be upheld, violence addressed, and systems enabling displacement dismantled.

God’s redemptive purposes for the exiled Judahites demonstrates divine justice often operates through human institutions. In this light, the Kukis’ expectation of government intervention is not a denial of faith but an expression of it. Their hope holds together trust and demand while waiting for intervention and restoration.

### **Reflection on “Ebenezer”: Witnessing the Presence of God**

The theme ‘Ebenezer’ functions as a memorial sign that simultaneously recalls God’s past fidelity and anticipates future deliverance. When Samuel erects the stone and declares, “Thus far the Lord has helped us” (1 Samuel 7:12), the confession is neither a declaration of final victory nor an expression of naive optimism. Rather, it is a carefully reasoned theological judgment made in the midst of ongoing uncertainty, grounded in concrete experience of God’s sustaining help rather than in the full resolution of conflict. Ebenezer thus marks divine faithfulness within an unfinished

narrative, affirming that God's assistance is real and operative. Applied to the context of the Kukis in Manipur, Ebenezer becomes a hermeneutical framework for interpreting suffering without collapsing into despair or spiritual denial. The survival of the Kuki community amid devastation is understood not as accidental resilience but as evidence of God's preservative grace. Faith sustained in displacement camps, communal solidarity in shared suffering, and continued worship amid loss function as lived confessions of divine presence. At the same time, Ebenezer does not negate pain or sanctify injustice, it confesses presence without closure. To invoke Ebenezer, therefore, is to assert that exile is not the final theological category of Kuki history, but a provisional condition held within the horizon of divine faithfulness and anticipated justice.

### Conclusion

The Kuki–Meitei conflict reveals the tragic reality of exile without migration, displacement without departure. The Kukis' suffering exposes political injustice, systemic failure, and ethical collapse. Yet, when read through the lens of biblical exile and the theology of Ebenezer, their story also becomes one of resilient faith and hopeful resistance. Like Judah, the Kukis wait not in despair, but in expectation that justice will emerge, that divine presence will be revealed through human instruments, and that exile will not have the final word. Until that day, the cry of the Kukis remains both a lament and a confession, "Thus far the Lord has helped us."

“

**EBENEZER DOES NOT NEGATE PAIN OR  
SANCTIFY INJUSTICE—IT CONFESSES  
PRESENCE WITHOUT CLOSURE,  
AFFIRMING THAT EXILE IS NOT THE  
FINAL WORD.**

”

## Stones in the Soil of North East

In Northeast-  
where hills wear gold and the sky opens like  
sapphire-  
they came.  
Not for empire.  
Not for applause.  
But for a Name whispered louder than fear.

Through thick jungles soaked in silence,  
where idols kept watch with heavy eyes,  
they walked.  
Not crowned in glory,  
but carried by love.

No trumpets.  
Just footsteps-  
and the Word,  
breaking through ancient hush like fire.

Judson wore chains.  
Ann wept prayers like rain.  
Ko Tha Byu, once a blade,  
became a voice.  
Not a soldier-  
but a seed-planter.

There were no parades.  
Only opened eyes,  
and hearts that burned  
long after the candles went out.



**Ezakel**  
BD-III



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*Best compliments*

**“Thus far the Lord has helped us.”**

**1 Samuel 7:12**



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# EBENEZER I AND EBENEZER II: Mizpah as a Liminal Space of Divine Pedagogy in 1 Samuel 4–7

SRI LATHA DHULIPALLA

BD-II



(The designations “Ebenezer I” and “Ebenezer II” are employed here as theological markers within Israel’s narrative memory, distinguishing two covenantal encounters with God—one marked by presumption and defeat, the other by repentance and divine help.)

## When God Is Invoked but God Is Not Obeyed

Can the people of God possess sacred symbols and yet lose the living presence of God? Can religious confidence coexist with covenantal infidelity? The narrative of Ebenezer in 1 Samuel 4–7 confronts these enduring theological questions with unsettling clarity. Remarkably, the name “Ebenezer” appears first at a site of humiliating defeat and later at a moment of decisive deliverance. What changes is not God’s faithfulness, but Israel’s posture before God.

Between these two Ebenezers unfolds a pattern of divine pedagogy, God’s purposeful work of forming His people through judgment, delay, repentance, and renewal. The story exposes the danger of presumption, critiques empty religiosity, and calls God’s people back to obedient remembrance. This narrative speaks powerfully to contemporary faith

communities tempted to trust symbols, institutions, or strategies more than the living God.

## Ebenezer I (1 Samuel 4): The Ark in the Camp and the Absence of God

The first mention of Ebenezer arises in the shadow of defeat. After suffering loss at the hands of the Philistines, Israel assumes the crisis is tactical rather than theological. Their response is immediate: “Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us” (1 Sam 4:3). The language is revealing. God is not sought in prayer; He is summoned through an object.

Here lies the central tragedy of Ebenezer I: the Ark is present, yet the presence of God is withheld.

The Ark symbolized Yahweh’s throne and covenantal nearness (Exod 25:22), but it was never intended to function independently of obedience. Israel’s leadership was corrupt (1 Sam 2), the word of the Lord was rare (1 Sam 3:1), and covenant faithfulness had eroded. Yet Israel expected divine power to operate automatically through sacred means. This reflects what may be called sacramental presumption, treating holy symbols as guarantees rather than signs.

The prophets later confront this same distortion. Jeremiah denounces reliance on sacred structures without repentance

(Jer 7:4–11), while Isaiah exposes worship divorced from justice and obedience (Isa 1:11–17). The New Testament echoes this critique in warning against “the form of godliness without its power” (2 Tim 3:5).

As Calvin observed, the human heart persistently fashions idols, even from God’s own gifts. Israel’s defeat at Ebenezer I is therefore not God’s failure but God’s judgment, a moment of sacred failure through which divine instruction begins.

## Mizpah (1 Samuel 7): The Watchtower of Repentance and Divine Pedagogy

Following the catastrophe, the narrative slows. The Ark disappears from Israel’s religious center, and twenty years pass. Israel “laments after the LORD” (1 Sam 7:2), yet longing alone does not restore covenant fidelity. Baal and Ashtaroth remain. This reveals a state of covenantal ambivalence, desiring God’s help while resisting God’s exclusive claim. Hosea would later describe such divided loyalty as spiritual adultery (Hos 2:13).

Mizpah becomes the decisive turning point. Its meaning, watchtower, suggests vigilance, exposure, and self-examination. Samuel’s prophetic

summons is uncompromising: “If you are returning to the LORD with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods” (1 Sam 7:3). This echoes Joshua’s covenant challenge (Josh 24:15) and anticipates the prophetic call to wholehearted repentance (Joel 2:12–13).

At Mizpah, Israel fasts, confesses sin, and pours out water before the Lord, an act that likely signifies self-emptying, vulnerability, and total dependence, though its precise ritual meaning remains debated. What is clear, is that repentance becomes embodied, not merely verbal. Divine pedagogy is evident here: God withholds victory until Israel is re-formed into a people capable of receiving grace rightly.

Proverbs affirms that “the LORD disciplines those He loves” (Prov 3:12), a truth later applied to the Church in Hebrews 12:5–11. Discipline here is not punitive abandonment but formative love.

Saint Augustine’s spiritual journey reflects this Mizpah moment. Though he longed for God, he clung to competing loves. Only through painful self-exposure could he confess in the Confessions: “You were within me, but I was outside myself.” True longing becomes transformative only when idols are relinquished.

### **Ebenezer II (1 Samuel 7): The Presence of God without the Ark**

When the Philistines attack again, the narrative presents a striking reversal. The Ark is absent. No sacred object is carried into battle. Instead, Samuel intercedes, Israel remains gathered in repentance, and God acts decisively. The Lord thunders from heaven (1 Sam 7:10), recalling Sinai (Exod 19:16) and prophetic imagery of divine intervention (Ps 29).

Samuel then sets up a stone and names it Ebenezer, declaring, “Thus far the LORD has helped us” (1 Sam 7:12). The contrast is unmistakable: in chapter 4, the Ark was present without God’s presence; in chapter 7, God’s presence is manifest without the Ark.

This reveals a foundational theological truth: God’s presence is relational, covenantal, and sovereign. Sacred symbols are meaningful, but they do not compel divine action. As Karl Barth insisted, God is never at human disposal, God remains God. The shift from Ebenezer I to Ebenezer II marks Israel’s movement from manipulation to trust, from presumption to obedience.

This anticipates a broader biblical trajectory. The prophets declare that obedience matters more than sacrifice (Hos 6:6). Jesus proclaims that something greater than the temple is

present (Matt 12:6). Paul teaches that believers are now God’s dwelling place through the Spirit (1 Cor 3:16). Ultimately, Christ Himself becomes the true Stone, the living cornerstone (1 Pet 2:4); the final and personal Ebenezer through whom God’s help is definitively given.

### **From Presumption to Remembrance**

The journey from Ebenezer I to Ebenezer II is the journey from using God, to walking with God. It confronts faith communities that desire divine intervention without divine transformation, that long for God while tolerating modern Baals of power, success, and security.

Mizpah still stands as God’s watchtower, calling the Church to vigilance, repentance, and renewed obedience. Then only then can Ebenezer be spoken truthfully, not as entitlement, but as testimony.

In Jesus Christ, the ultimate Ebenezer, God’s presence is no longer mediated through objects but through obedient faith and covenantal communion. He is not the God we deploy, but the Lord we follow.

“Thus far the LORD has helped us.”

And thus far, He continues to teach His people how to walk in His ways.

“

**THE JOURNEY FROM EBENEZER I TO EBENEZER II IS THE JOURNEY FROM USING GOD TO WALKING WITH GOD.**

”



## A TRUTHFUL

*Lie*

HOSANNA ARASU

BD IV

The warm winds of the Bethel School ground has turned chill because the cold tears of Peter mixed with the atmosphere. He was often bullied by his classmates. They called him orphan, though he confronted them by saying his parents had gone overseas for their work, they were not ready to believe him and asked him why they have never visited even once to see him in all these years. They hunted him for his tears. He returned home with pale face and burdened heart.

It was the next day morning; Peter was fed up with the bullies he wanted to put an end to this trauma. He came up with a plan; He took his little piggy bank in which he was saving the pocket money his grandma used to give him. He was saving it buy him a bicycle. He threw it on the floor, He gathered the bills scattered across the floor. It was around two thousand five hundred rupees. He tucked it into his shirt pocket and started to walk down the alley.

There he saw a man who was begging to spare some change. He was a drunkard and no one bothered him. Everyone ignored his plea; he was like a shadow on the roadside that anyone bothered to notice. Peter walked straight to him and pulled two five hundred rupees notes and waved at him. The man didn't want to take the money from a school kid. He told Peter "Hey go away kid, buy yourself a football!" Peter was stubborn he waved another thousand rupees and asked "What about now?" The man was little tempted a little. He thought he could buy booze for four days straight. He thought he could accept the boy's request if it is not troublesome. He asked what he wanted to do. The boy replied "Be my father for couple of hours" The man was shocked and yelled "I will be never someone's father" Peter simply replied in a steady voice saying "Do as I say and take the

money". The man was bit hesitant but decided to take the money. He agreed to the boy's request but complained he was dirty and smelled alcohol all over his body. Peter asked him to freshen up and come. Though he wanted not to do so the money the boy offered made him to go to his home. He took bath and changed his clothes. Now Peter took a charcoal grey jacket from his back pack and gave it to the man and commanded "Put it on" It was definitely a piece of garment a respectable man would wear. He was hesitant to wear; he thought he was not so respectable to wear it. But Peter insisted to wear it. Finally he agreed to wear it. The jacket was little big for him however he tried to fit into it.

Now both started to walk towards the school. They got themselves introduced. The boy told his name was Peter, The man said he was Silas. Peter told Silas to impose as his father who had returned from overseas. Silas nodded his head. Soon they arrived at school gates. The boys who used to bully him were shocked seeing Peter walk with his father. Their hands became cold in fear. Silas was an ex-army man, his strong built brought chill in their spines. They pulled Peter in the hallway and whispered, "Hey Peter! We were just joking all along. Please don't complain to your father or principal!" Peter didn't reply to

them. He just walked back to Silas. Now his walk was no more trembling. Both walked into the hall where Parent's teacher meet was scheduled. Both took their seats at the back.

Suddenly Silas phone buzzed. He walked out of the room to pick it up. It was from Parthasarathy his booze mate. He was calling Silas to come immediately. But Silas asked him to wait for another half an hour so that he would get two thousand rupees. Parthasarathy told him not to worry as he already picked some one's wallet and was full of stack of 500 rupee bills, so they need not worry for next whole week. Silas thought for a second and decided to sneak out without anyone noticing him. Suddenly a voice from his back stopped him. It was Peter's class teacher Miss. Mary.

Silas was frightened that he would be exposed. Miss Mary walked towards him and said she was well aware that he was not the actual father of Peter. She added that she knew all along that Peter was faking it. She told him that how those boys were bullying him and they never changed even after many warnings. Now she pointed out Peter and said "look how confident now he is? He used to be hesitant and trembling whenever he sees those boys. Now

his legs are on solid ground, once he would bow as an arch now he is straight and sitting like a king. All of these are because of your presence with him.” Silas was moved and decided to stay back.

The meeting was over, Peter and Silas walked back to the alley where they met. Peter handed over two thousand rupees as promised and started to walk back. Silas called him back and thanked him. Now Peter came back and started to speak “Mr. Silas, I knew that my parent’s died in a car accident long back when I was an infant. My grandparents are taking care of me. My grandmother thinks I would be shattered if I came to know that my parents have died. She tells me a sweet lie that they are abroad working hard for me and will soon return. I too will pretend to believe her. I knew they would never come back anyhow today I was a best day in my life! Thank you for everything” Saying this Peter was about to leave. Silas hugged him and slipped back the money into his backpack without the boy noticing.

Silas sat in that place for a brief of time. He could not imagine the hardship the boy was going through. He walked back to his home. He was haunted by the feel of loneliness the boy was facing. He then realized that he was still wearing the Jacket of his Father. He thought he would definitely meet him again as the boy would come to get his father’s Jacket back. When he was about to remove it he found a paper in the pocket.

It read “Dear Sir, I live next door. Yet you never noticed me. You leave earlier and came back late and you was always drunk and never cared to see anyone. One day I was sitting lonely and tears rolled down my cheek, you came to me and wiped my tears and went back to your home. I know you would not remember it but for me it was the only time I felt the warmth of a father. From that day onwards, I never felt alone. I would stay awake till you reach your home. I will close my eyes to sleep only after hearing your voice from the window at night. It gave me comfort and courage. I didn’t forget my father’s Jacket; I wanted to see you wearing it. I will not forget this couple of hours I spent with you, I will cherish the feel of being with a father for my lifetime. Thank You!”

Reading this note Silas collapsed on his chair. His hand trembled holding the letter. His heart was burdened as hell. The world called him a sinner, drunkard, useless and he was a mere shadow the world bothered to notice. But today he was a savior, a responsible father, the one who was counted, the one who was foundation stone of courage in the eyes of an orphan little boy. He decided to love the boy as his own son. The jacket once big has now started to fit him perfect.

The world may think we are useless as rock on the path. But God wants us to be the living rock for someone and to be the Ebenezer for the people in need. Ebenezer is far more than a mere rock or a silent monument; it is the warmth of a smile when the world feels cold, a word of welcome that says you belong, a hug that absorbs your sorrow, and the quiet strength of a prayer whispered in the midst of deep pain, a steady shoulder to lean on.

*If viewed with gratitude,  
the shores of our lives are lined with Ebezers.  
if gratitude is forgotten,  
they are merely stones present by the seashore.*



## THE PERSON

## I KNOW

JOSHUA SOLOMON

BD IV

The world usually listens when a story is about someone who is successful or well-known. This is not that kind of story. This is about a person I have known since childhood. I have spent a long time watching him from the corners of my own memory. For years, I kept his failures locked away, afraid that if I looked too closely, I would see myself in the reflection. But today, I decided to open that box and reveal the ‘Person I know’.

To be honest, he was not someone people expected much from. I have seen him fail in many ways. I have seen him struggle, make mistakes, and fall again and again. For a long time, it almost felt like he was used to falling.

He used to have lots of friends, but as the days went by after our U.G. days in college, I felt like he distanced himself from everyone. Nobody really cared about that. Even I didn’t bother much when he started distancing himself from us. Maybe it was the effect of a long-distance friendship.

Still, I remember the day he called me and asked me to visit his college when he was doing his master’s degree. That itself surprised me. I thought he had called many people, but it was only me. That was a big surprise for me, because he was always surrounded by people. Wherever he went, there would be groups, laughing. But this time, he called only me.

When I reached his college, the campus was full of life. Students were moving around in bright clothes, talking, and laughing under the shade of the tall trees. I expected to see him in the middle of a crowd like before. But it was different. He

walked toward me with a smile. The same face but something about him was calm and settled. We spoke for a while, and he introduced me to a few of his friends. Only a few, not the large group I had always seen around him. I didn’t ask anything, but I noticed it.

After some time, a few of his juniors joined us. They spoke with him freely, and most of the conversation was in English. I stood there quietly, listening. Then one of them said, “Thanks for helping me out in English.” Another nodded in agreement. I looked at him. He just smiled, as if it was nothing. But for me, it was not nothing.

Because I remembered a different time. During his school days, English was one of his biggest struggles. His family once took him to a tutor, hoping that he would help him improve. But instead of helping, that person spoke negatively and said he would never be good at English. I still remember how that affected him. He didn’t argue. He didn’t respond. But he carried it. He passed his exams, but only with low marks. It wasn’t easy for him. But something changed later, I guess. He started working on it quietly. He began learning the phonetics of the English language word by word, sound by sound. No one really noticed that process. Even in college, he continued to

improve. During assignments and presentations, he struggled to speak. Sometimes he would stumble even with simple sentences. Some of his classmates made fun of him. They joked about his English and even made memes. But he didn’t stop.

Even I thought that, after putting in this much effort, he would succeed, but he still looked the same. But now, the same person was speaking confidently and even helping others to speak in English. Standing there in his college and listening to that, I could see how far he had come.

In the afternoon, we were sitting together for lunch. A few more students joined us. The conversation shifted, and someone said, “He is a very good musician and singer.” We listened to a Gospel artist’s song playing through the canteen speaker. Since most of his friends were from a musical background, they started talking about the song. It seemed like they had sung that same song before. His juniors told him that the song they had sung in the college chapel was very nice. They said it was a golden time. They also felt sad that they could not jam together anymore. Since he used to compose, program, and arrange the music, they felt they would miss his new take on old songs. I didn’t react. I just listened.

I remember the time when he began learning a musical instrument. I saw how it started, with hesitation, questions, and even doubt. I once asked him how he would learn at that stage, because he had started late, in his second year of college, an age when most people think it is already too late. But he did not argue. He simply smiled and continued. That was his way. He kept practicing slowly and consistently, without rushing or trying to prove anything to anyone. His seniors were better than him, yet they still gave him chances, and he made good use of them. Somewhere along the way, he made a quiet decision to use his talent only for God. He did not speak about it loudly or publicly, but he remained faithful to it.

I thought it was a foolish decision. If a person can play any instrument and goes into the field of secular music, he can earn a lot. Even if he just holds an instrument in some functions, they would pay him. I thought he was wasting his time.

But days later, we went to a competition organized by Youth For Christ for school and college students. The hall was fully packed. Suddenly, he stopped and tried to hide his face from some people in the crowd. Standing there was one of his old school teachers. This was the same woman who had once looked him in the eye and said he would never succeed. For a moment, he paused, thinking she would not recognize him since it had happened so long ago.

Then, he went onto the stage. He performed with everything he had. During lunchtime, as we were about to pass the teacher, she surprised us. She called his name and put a hand on his shoulder. She looked at the students who were eating and said with a shaky but proud voice, "This is my student."

The very same voice that once spoke words of failure now spoke words of pride. The person who once doubted him was now the one telling the world how far he had come.

After this, he urged me to go to the church near our house. I thought he wanted to meet someone, but nobody was there. It was quiet inside. He went inside and came back. I noticed something that his eyes were wet. When he came back, I thought he had cried like a coward and would be sad for the rest of the day. But he was happier than usual. I wanted to ask him what happened in the church, but I didn't. Some things are better left unsaid. Unsaid things are more valuable than the said ones.

Now in the present it makes me think, maybe if he had entered the secular field just to show off his talent, it would have meant nothing. Years ago, he was put to shame in front of his own classmates, and that weight had stayed with him for a long time. But now, those same people were the ones praising him. It happened because he made a quiet decision to use his talents for God alone. God took all that old shame and turned it into a blessing.

After seeing these things, When I look back now, I understand something I didn't understand before. He wasn't just falling, he was learning. Learning how the ground felt, so that one day he could build something that would not break. What looked like failure was not failure. Those were the very things that built him.

In the evening, after everyone left, I sat alone in the canteen with a cup of hot coffee. The steam rose from the cup while the sun started to set. To be honest, I didn't know why he had asked me to visit. I was busy with my own problems and my own worries. But as I sat there in the quiet, I realized something important.

We often forget how far we've come because we focus too much on our struggles. In those moments, we need to pause and remember how God has carried us. Our efforts matter, but without Him, nothing lasts. When life feels heavy, don't dwell on failures but rather look back at your journey. When we have that hope, even taking one small step backward is worth more than running a mile with a heavy heart. No one understands it better than you. And when you truly reflect, you'll realize you were never alone.

Till now, God has helped him. And that is enough for him to keep going.

I left that place with a confidence that I never had before. I realized that the person I was watching was actually the person I used to be. That realization made me start living in the present, putting all my trust in Him.

**Thus far, God has carried me.**



## OBSTACLE IS NOT

*An End*

KOLAGANI  
SHALMA PAUL  
BD IV

As a theological student, when I first heard the theme “Ebenezer,” I wanted to read the biblical passage where it all began. It is found in 1 Samuel 7:1–12. The word “Ebenezer” appears in verse 12.

In Hebrew: אָבֶן־הָעֵזֶר – ‘Eben hā‘ēzer

’Eben = stone

‘Ezer = help

This means “Ebenezer” stands for “Stone of Help” or “Thus far the Lord has helped us.”

If we read only verse 12, it feels like a victorious roar—not exactly a celebration, but a cry of thanksgiving, a praise offering.

At that moment, I began to reflect on my life, which had undergone dramatic changes.

Although I was born into a well-established family—with our own school administration having more than 500 students and over 50 teaching and non-teaching staff—everything was going well.

But in the year 2000, one Sunday after church service, our family—my father, mother, younger brother, and I—were returning home. Suddenly, a city bus came from behind and collided with our two-wheeler. It was a major accident that occurred in the city center of Guntur.

My mother, who was seated at the back, was directly hit and suffered a spinal injury. My younger brother, who was just a few months old and seated in the front,

fell to the ground and sustained both internal and external injuries. I was seated between my parents. After we fell, the bus ran over the bike while my father and I were still beneath it. As the bus crushed the bike, my father’s legs were severely fractured. He took the major impact, while I sustained only minor injuries.

At the hospital, doctors advised amputating my father’s legs. However, we had faith and prayed to God. After undergoing four surgeries on one leg and nine on the other, and even going into a coma three times, my father survived. God saved him during that crucial time and enabled him to walk again.

In 2019, when my father was admitted to the hospital for a minor surgery, I was returning from Vijayawada Highway with my uncle on a bike. A speeding vehicle hit us, but God saved us from another serious accident.

Last year, in October 2025, my father was admitted to the hospital in critical condition—he had liver enlargement, heart enlargement, kidney damage, and his body had gone into sepsis. Doctors gave up and said he might live only 24 to 48 hours. But God saved him again and enabled him to return to church.

However, on 18th December 2025, when we went for a routine check-up, my father unexpectedly passed away due to a heart stroke after receiving heavy medication. Our family was filled with grief.

Yet, when I reflect on all these events and how far God has helped and protected my family, I feel compelled to cry out to Him in praise and say, “You are our Ebenezer—thus far You have helped us.”

If anyone asks me, “Even though your father died, why do you still praise God as Ebenezer?”

I would answer this: our entire family, including my father, could have died in that accident in the year 2000. But God preserved my father for nearly 25 years beyond that moment. And even now, He continues to sustain our family by His grace.



## STONE OF HELP

THANGTINMANG  
GUTE  
BD III

Once upon a time, there was a small village named Khamdi, which was located far from the city. One evening, the sun sank behind the hills of Khamdi, and painted the sky in hues of orange and purple. A cool breeze carried the fragrance of the wet earth through the quiet village where Daniel lived, a young school teacher admired for his kindness but known for his worries.

Daniel's life had been far from easy. He had lost his father at the age of twelve. His widowed mother struggled day and night to raise him. Yet by God's grace and the help of others, he completed his studies and became a school teacher in the village. Yet whenever trouble came, his heart trembled with fear.

One year, a long drought struck the land. Fields dried up, food became scarce. Many families abandoned the village in search of work. Daniel too thought of leaving. "What is the use of staying here" he murmured, "the school will close and my life will fall apart".

That evening, heavy-heartedly he entered the old Church. There sat pastor Elias, a grey-haired man with gentle eyes. Seeing Daniel's troubled face, he asked "my son, what burdens your heart?".

"Pastor," Daniel sighed, "each time I feel secure another trial comes, I feel God has abandoned me".

The pastor smiled softly and pointed to the stone near the altar, "it is our village 'Ebenezer'. Twenty years ago, a flood destroyed everything. Yet when we prayed here, God saved us. Every time we see this, we remember, 'Thus far the Lord has

helped us', when God never failed in the past, he will not fail you now. Your life is full of Ebenezer, moment when he carried you, remember them.

That night, Daniel reflected on his journey, and remembered his widowed mother's sacrifices, the neighbour who paid his exam fee and the stranger who once fed him in the city. Step by step, God had guided him.

One day, he returned to school to see that only ten children were present, their faces pale with hunger. But instead of despair, he felt courage rise within him. With renewed strength he taught them. Later he led the children to plant seeds behind the school. "We may not have much rain", he said, "but let us do our part, God will do the rest."

Day after day, they tended the little plot. Though the rain delayed, the children's hope did not. Weeks dragged on and one morning, the clouds gathered. First came drizzle, then showers and finally the downpour that soaked the thirsty earth. The school garden blossomed with life.

Word spread through the village, what began as a small school garden became a symbol of hope. Families who

had planned to leave chose to stay. The school became the beating heart of the village, where hope, faith and resilience were taught alongside reading and arithmetic.

Years passed, Daniel grew older but he never forgot the seasons of drought. What once seemed like a disaster became his turning point in life. He placed the stone behind the schoolyard, much like the one in the church. He carved onto it the words that had sustained him, "Ebenezer-Thus far the Lord has helped us".

Moral of the story: Like Daniel, we all face those seasons of drought, times of fear, loss or uncertainty. But knowing God has carried us in the past gives courage for the future. Truly, "Thus far the Lord has helped us."



## I DIDN'T NOTICE THEN

YERRAM  
RITCHIE JOSHUA  
BD-III

Elias sat in the bus and checked his pocket. No earphones. He realized he had left them at home. He sighed. “Forget it,” he thought. He was sure this would be a boring ride home.

Then an old lady sat next to him. She looked a little confused. “Beta, do you know where Shalome Nagar comes?” Elias nodded. “I’m going there. I’ll let you know.” She smiled. “Thank you. I always get confused.” Usually, Elias would put on his earphones now. But today, he just sat quietly.

After a while, she started talking. “I’m going to see my granddaughter. She just had a baby.” Elias smiled a little. “That’s nice.” She noticed the ring on his hand.

“Are you married?”, “Yes,” he said. “Do you have children?” Elias paused. “We are expecting... in two months.” Her face softened. She looked ahead, lost in thought. After a moment, she said, “Those days... are the best days of life.” Her eyes teared up a little. Elias kept thinking about what she said. He imagined how his life would soon change. Then he noticed they had reached Shalome Nagar. “This is your stop,” he said. He helped her get down. She wished him good luck, thanked him and left.

Everything was normal again. But something felt different inside him.

A quiet joy. He didn’t know why. He smiled a little. Then he realized: “I almost missed this.” “I didn’t listen to music... but I heard something better.”

Sometimes, we don’t notice how God is guiding us in small moments. It is later that we understand that we were being gently led and cared for. Like Ebenezer, we can look back and say, “Thus far, the Lord has helped me.”



## DIVINE HELP

JOHN PAUL  
BD II

There was a zamindar who was a rich man. He lived in Thimmapuram village. He wanted to buy some groceries in the town, so he took the house cart and started his journey. While he was on his way, he saw beggars at the entrance of the town gate. He saw the beggar on the right side who was begging for food; behind him there was a small stick board, and on it was written, “God is my helper, He is great.”

Then the zamindar said, “You are on one side begging and saying God is my helper and God is great; I can assure that no one can help you.” The other beggar who sat on the left side listened to this conversation, and immediately he took some ash beside him and wrote on the wall, “Zamindar is great.” The zamindar saw what was written on the wall, and he read that sentence and was happy, and he also twisted his moustache and went on his way.

The next day, he told his servant to take his food and give it to the beggar who was sitting at the entrance of the town gate on the left side. In that food he put three golden coins. When the servant went to the left-side beggar, he had just completed his food and was washing his hands. The servant came and told the beggar to take this food. As he had already had his food, he took it and gave it the right-side beggar. The right-side beggar opened that food packet and saw three golden coins and delicious food.

Then after the next day, the left-side beggar was sitting and begging, but the right-side beggar was not present at that place. The zamindar asked the left beggar if he got the food that he had sent him by his servant. He said, “Yes sir, but as I already had my food, I gave it to the right-side beggar.”



**A SIGN OF  
HOPE  
IN THE STORM**

SUI MANG LIAN

BD II

Long ago, in a quiet village surrounded by hills. There lived a young boy named Nathan. He has been orphaned since he was five years old. His grandfather took care of him. The villagers were poor farmers. Every year they worked hard from sunrise till sunset. They struggled for their survival. One particular year, the storms came to the village. The river overflowed, the fields were washed away, the crops were destroyed by the storms. The villagers were left nothing to eat.

The villagers gathered in fear, some said, "we were cursed". Some cried shouting "God is angry upon us". But Nathan's grandfather who was the oldest man in the village stood and said, "When our ancestors were in trouble, God helped them so we must do the same". Some people didn't believe what Nathan's grandfather told but the storms were getting worse day by day. There was no other way to come out from that crisis.

Finally, they accepted the advice of Nathan's grandfather. The villagers gathered at Nathan's house and they prayed to God. Three days later, the storms had passed, the river calmed, the fields began to recover, the crops grew again and the food came back to their home. The villagers were glad and said "God had saved us". To remember that movement, the grandfather carried a large stone up to the hill overlooking the village. He placed it firmly on the ground and said "we shall call this stone Ebenezer - stone of help".

Many years later, the young people became adults and Nathan also grew into adults. The stone still stood on the hill but the story of the stone was forgotten by the people. Nathan alone remembered. One day, the storms come back to the

village, fiercer than the last. The people cried and said "There was no way to survive this time". Nathan prayed to God and pointed to the stone on the hill and said "That stone was called Ebenezer for the sign of God's deliver. When our mother and father were in crisis, God help to them. In this time also God will help us". His words gave encouragement to the people. They worked together, they made strong barriers, they shared food with one another and prayed to God. The storms had passed and one more time the village escaped from the storms.

From that day onwards, the villagers gathered once a year near the stone as a reminder of God's faithfulness. They did not worship the stone, but remembered how God had delivered them in times of trouble. They shared this story with the younger generation so that their faith in God would remain strong. The stone stood as a witness to God's help, giving them courage, strength, and hope.

*Don't let your current mountain make you forget  
the Ebezers you've already built in the valley.*



**THUS FAR,  
HE HELPED**

**SRI LATHA DHULIPALLA  
BD II**

In the darkest interiors of the Dark Continent of Africa, there served a woman as a missionary, sharing the powerful Gospel of peace and hope with those who were bound by the chains of ignorance, poverty, oppression, witchcraft, superstitions, idolatry, human sacrifices, etc. Tossed by different challenges from the natives, hatred and attacks from the resisting witchcraft doctors, or the witch doctors as they are usually called, and often encountering threats of killing from the shrine worshippers and especially from the 'kabaka', the tribal chief and ruler of the local tribe and the community, along with the demonic attacks of territorial spirits, uncertain extreme climate changes, financial crises, and repeated malarial sicknesses, she was drained completely of her strength. But the faithful God, whom she served, had been her strength and shield all through her spiritual journey.

Despite all those unwelcoming challenges, she was persistent in her call to participate in Missio Dei. Days, months, and years passed by, but she couldn't experience the joy of a soul coming to Christ in that village or from that tribe. So, she kept praying and serving the community in God's love through her words of comfort, sharing food, helping the sick, etc. She pressed on with faith, prayer, hope, and perseverance. After years of her waiting on God, the God who not only hears our prayers but also answers at the right time blessed her with a soul from that tribe. That soul was Irene, who was the most neglected wife and one among many wives of the local tribe chief, 'kabaka'. In her neglected and most vulnerable state, the Gospel encountered her and dawned hope and joy into her despair-filled heart. She continued to visit the lady missionary at her house often, and both together prayed for the salvation of Kabaka and the whole tribe.

This enraged Kabaka. Knowing that his wife had embraced some foreign God made him unhappy. His many attempts at threatening to kill her if she didn't leave Jesus were in vain. He noticed as if his life, finances, health, crops and everything was going downhill. He visited a witch doctor who was quite powerful and popular in that area. The witch doctor was so dangerous that everyone in and around that tribe feared and revered him. The witch doctor told Kabaka that his misfortune was because of his wife Irene, and that if she was offered as a sacrifice to their tribal god, and if her blood was sprinkled on all of his possessions, Kabaka would experience an overflow of blessings. Kabaka, upon hearing this, was quite happy to sacrifice Irene in exchange for his blessing. This news petrified Irene. She didn't want to die but to be a witness in her tribe. She immediately ran to the missionary for help, because nothing could stop Kabaka from sacrificing Irene. That night, she shared the whole story with the missionary.

Only God was their Refuge. Both of them prayed earnestly, pouring out their hearts. It was very heavy on the missionary's heart too to see her newborn in Christ face such a huge challenge. She couldn't lose her, the reward of her years of toil. After a time of prayer, both submitted the situation into God's hands, seeking His

help. The missionary prayed and gave the small bottle of oil which Irene had brought while visiting her. The night came, and the witch doctor came to Kabaka's house, and Kabaka also was well prepared. The witch continued reciting the demonic mantras and finally asked for Irene to be brought. Irene, meanwhile, prepared herself by applying the whole oil to her body in faith and came and presented herself in the ritual. The witch doctor suddenly noticed that all his mantras were backfiring, creating a severe burning fire sensation, and he immediately fled from there. Before fleeing, he said to Kabaka that there was a very strong and powerful force in Irene that was hindering him. Kabaka was surprised. Irene glorified God for her life and testified everything to Kabaka. The fear of God filled Kabaka, and he knelt and surrendered himself to the true God. He witnessed to the whole tribe. Most of the tribe came to Christ.

The above story is my life experience of God as 'Ebenezer'—the Stone of Help in times of trouble, fear, despair, and darkness. The Ebenezer God rightly manifested at the right time. The Ebenezer God, who is our help and has led us thus far in years of sicknesses, challenges, and despairs, sent His divine intervention where the spiritual reality met the temporal, as Ebenezer. (1Sam 7:12).



## WHEN THE ROCK GAVE

WATER

FC BEILAKHAI  
BD O

Long ago, in a quiet valley surrounded by high mountains, there lived a young shepherd boy named Easia. He owned only a few sheep, and his life was often difficult. The rivers would sometimes dry up, wild animals lurked nearby, and storms swept across the valley without warning. Still, Easia trusted God and whispered prayers each day as he guided his flock.

One summer day, a terrible drought struck the land. The grass withered, and the streams became dust. He grew afraid, for his sheep were weak and thirsty. He climbed the mountain daily in search of water, but the spring he visited had dried up. His neighbors mocked him, saying, “Your prayers cannot fill the riverbed. You should give up before all your sheep die.”

One night, as he lay under the stars, he cried, “Lord, I have nothing left but hope in You. Please show me the way.” In his dream, he saw a shining hand pointing to a flat stone on the mountainside.

When he awoke, he remembered it clearly. Though it sounded foolish, he climbed the mountain once more. He came across the very stone he had seen in his dream. There was something hidden beneath it. He found a trickle of fresh water seeping from the rock. He dug around it, and soon a small spring burst forth. His sheep drank, and his neighbors’ flocks were saved, and the valley slowly bloomed again. In gratitude, he rolled that stone into the center of the village. On it, he carved the words, “Ebenezer – Thus far God has helped us.” From that day, the stone stood as a reminder that when all seemed lost, God provided help in His own way.

Years later, whenever circumstances looked hopeless, parents would point to the stone and tell their children, “Look at this stone. It reminds us that God’s help never fails, even when our eyes see only drought.”



## BEST COMPLIMENTS FROM

MOVVA RAVI KIRAN, VEMURI DEVASAHAYAM,  
YESUPADAM ULAVALAPUDI & YESUPOGU SARATHBABU

C.S.I. KRISHNA GODAVARI DIOCESE



**Maria Jenisha**  
BD IV



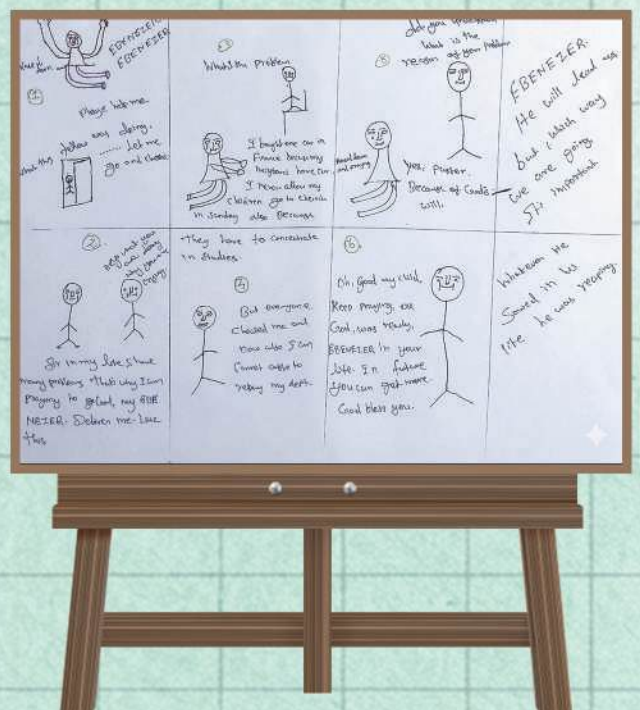
**Holy Dawt Tha Khun**  
BD III



**Joel Van Ram Thang**  
BD III



**Masilamani Praveen D**  
BD III





Van Bawi Thawng  
BD III



Veronica  
BD III



Anni Christy S  
BD II



Shaun Zipporah N  
BD II





**Kolagani Shalma Paul**  
BD IV



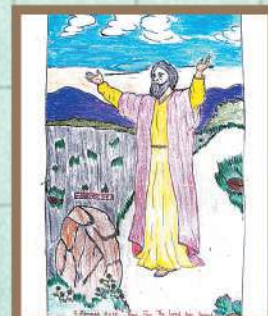
**Rhenius Thangam K**  
BD IV



**John Van Dawt Sang**  
BD III



**Mung Nei Khup**  
BD III



**Murphy Hram Bawi**  
BD III



**Gokula Rajesh**  
BD III





**K. Richie John Suheth**  
BD III



**S Solomon Badi**  
BD III



**Thengchim R Marak**  
BD III



**V. Victor Immanuel**  
BD III



**Cing Sian Ciang**  
BD II



**Kali Jashuva Sreemanth**  
BD II





**Demeranche R Marak**  
BD I



**G. Darshan Steward**  
BD I



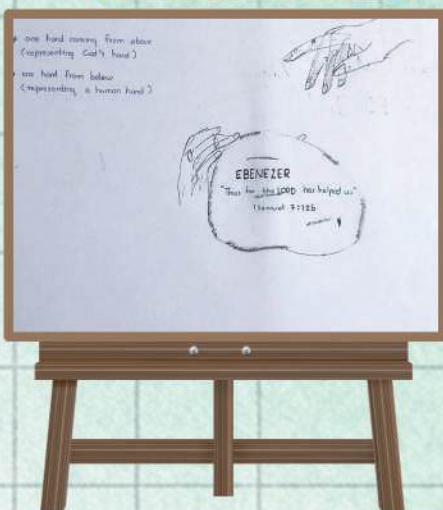
**Gekarina A Sangma**  
BD I



**Kothapalli Sunil**  
BD I



**Man Sian Vung**  
BD I



**Nokamchi Ch Marak**  
BD I





Van Lone Hnem  
BD I



Pasupula Nissi Pal  
BD O



**BEST COMPLIMENTS FROM**  
**YALAMARTI EMMANUEL S/O YALAMARTI JOHN**  
C.S.I. KARIMNAGAR DIOCESE

*María Jenisha T*  
BD IV



*Rhenius Thangam K*  
BD IV



*Sundar James S*  
BD IV



*Holy Dawt Tha Khun*  
BD III



*John Van Dawt Sang*  
BD III



*Mang Zing*  
BD III



*Ngun Len Tial*  
BD III



*Van Bawí Thawng*  
BD III



Zo Ban Kim  
BD III



Anni Christy S  
BD II



Demeranche  
R Marak  
BD I



Gekarina A  
Sangma  
BD I



Niang San Ciin  
BD 0



# CLASS PHOTOS



**BD-0**



**BD-1**



**BD-2**

# CLASS PHOTOS

**BD-3**



**BD-4**



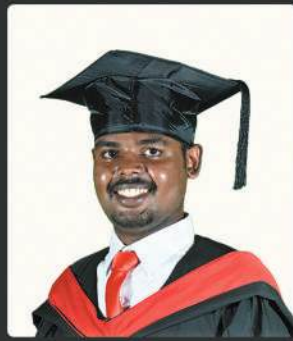
**CLASS REPRESENTATIVES**



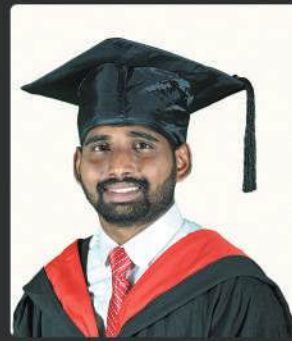
# GRADUATES 2026



**ANKAM  
DAVID KUMAR**



**ARUL  
PRAKASH S**



**CHAPALA  
JOHNSON**



**CIN  
PIL MUNG**



**CING  
DEIH MANG**



**HANG  
SIAN MUNG**



**J.S HOSANNA  
ARASU**



**JOEL  
BLESSING K**



**JOHAN  
LIAN**



**JOESAM  
NIRMAL J**



**JOSHUA  
SOLOMON S**



**KANDULA  
ROJ KUMAR**



**KOLAGANI  
SHALMA PAUL**



**LIAN HU**



**LIAN  
SIAN PIANG**



**MADDIRALA  
ASHOK KUMAR**



**MARAKHAI**



**MARIA  
JENISHA T**



**MOSAI F**

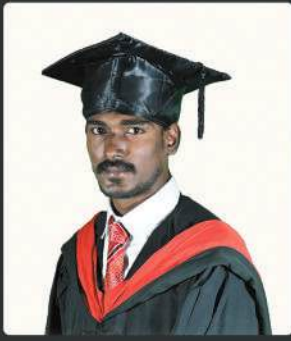


**MOVVA  
RAVI KIRAN**

# GRADUATES 2026



**RAVELLA  
ANAND RAJ**



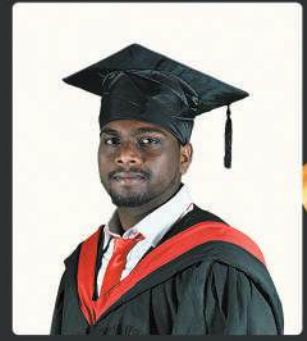
**RHENIUS  
THANGAM K**



**SAMUEL V**



**SANKAR  
GANESH K**



**SIMSON J**



**SRI  
GANESH K**



**SUAN  
MUN MUANG**



**SUAN  
SIAN MUANG**



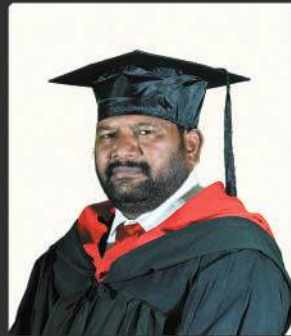
**SUNDAR  
JAMES S**



**YESUPOGU  
SARATHBABU**



**VEMURI  
DEVASAHAYAM**



**YESUPADAM  
ULAVALAPUDI**

*Congratulations*

# BBC COMMITTEES



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**HOSTEL COMMITTEE**



**PRACTICAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE**



**MEDIA COMMITTEE**



**MESS COMMITTEE**



**LITERARY COMMITTEE**



**SPORTS COMMITTEE**



**NON TEACHING STAFF**



# Yearly RECAP





# INAUGURAL SERVICE





# FRESHERS' DAY







# THEOLOGICAL SUNDAY





# INDEPENDENCE DAY



# GUNTUR ECUMENICAL CHRISTIAN PEACE RALLY





# TEACHERS' DAY







# LITERARY DAY

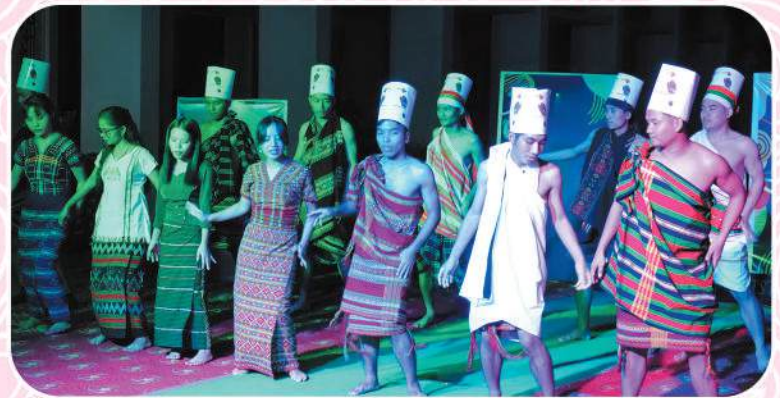






# CULTURAL DAY







# COLLEGE SPORTS DAY







# GIFT EXCHANGE





# SEMINAR



# REPUBLIC DAY





# PRACTICAL MINISTRY





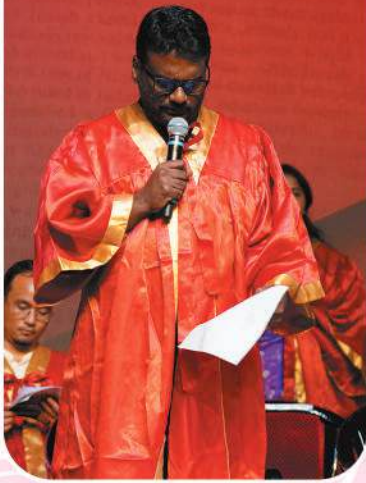


# FAREWELL





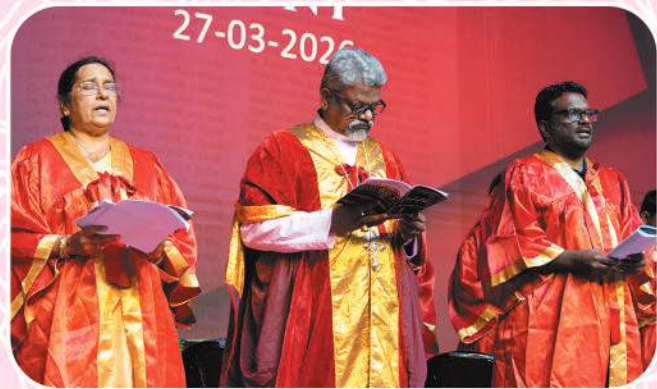
27-03-2026



# GRADUATION

96







# *St. Peter's Church*

**THIRUPPALAI, MADURAI**



**Rev. J. Jebakumar**  
Pastor



**Mr. Mathivanan  
Inbaraj**  
Secretary

*Best compliments*





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**MOST ENCHANTING DESTINATIONS**



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- TRIVANDRUM
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- GOA

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# Thank you

*Aleph 2026 stands as a living testimony of God being our Ebenezer throughout the journey of this magazine. This publication is the fruit of prayer, dedication, and the collective efforts of many hands and hearts.*

*We express our deepest gratitude to all the contributors, writers, artists, designers, financial supporters, and the BBC editorial team, whose commitment and creativity have brought this magazine to completion. Their tireless efforts and passion have made Aleph 2026 a meaningful and inspiring work.*

*We also extend our heartfelt thanks to our dear readers. Your time, interest, and encouragement mean so much to us. Your support and readership truly give purpose to our efforts. It is by you that this magazine comes to life. We hope that Aleph 2026 inspires, uplifts, and reminds you of God's faithfulness in your own journey.*

*Editorial Team*





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A MINISTRY OF GOSPEL MISSION OF INDIA

AFFILIATED TO THE SENATE OF SERAMPORE COLLEGE (UNIVERSITY)



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DURATION : 3 YEARS

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DIP.C.S. PASS

**BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY (B.TH.)**  
DURATION : 3 YEARS

**ELIGIBILITY:** INTERMEDIATE /  
+2 PASS

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DURATION : 2 YEARS

**ELIGIBILITY:** BACHELOR OF  
THEOLOGY/ B.C.S

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LAST DATE 31ST OCTOBER

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STUDIES (B.C.S.)**  
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**ELIGIBILITY:** GRADUATE

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AFTER B.D./ B.C.S.

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OF CHRISTIAN STUDIES (B.C.S.)**  
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**ELIGIBILITY:** DIP.C.S. PASS

**DIPLOMA IN CHRISTIAN  
STUDIES (DIP.C.S.)**  
DURATION : 2 YEARS

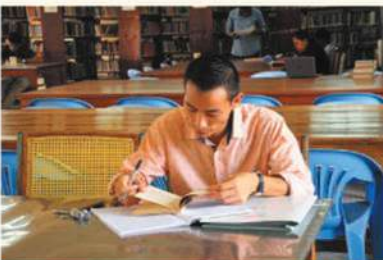
**ELIGIBILITY:** INTERMEDIATE /  
+2 OR 10TH PASS & 3 YEARS OF  
MINISTERIAL EXPERIENCE

**DIPLOMA IN CONTEXTUAL  
THEOLOGIES (DIP.C.T.)**  
DURATION : 1 YEAR

**ELIGIBILITY:** INTERMEDIATE /  
+2 PASS

**DIPLOMA IN CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION (DIP.C.E.)**  
DURATION : 1 YEAR

**ELIGIBILITY:** INTERMEDIATE /  
+2 PASS



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