

Happy Rebirthday!

18 November 2020

R. STANLEY



The Prayer Fellowship in Nazareth, Tamilnadu, India, in which I was born again on 18 November 1962 when I was 16. Sitting on chairs: L to R: (4) Mr. D.P. Gnanadurai (1941-2005) & (5) Mr. T. Michael Chellathurai (1933-2003), my Teachers, who led me to Christ. I'm sitting first on the left (1).

(See Pages 2-6 for a Rebirthday Meditation and Prayer.)

Happy Rebirthday!

A Meditation by R. Stanley

Introduction

One's Rebirthday is more important than his Birthday!

Because, the Bible says,

*“What's born of the flesh is flesh;
but what's born of the Spirit is spirit!”* (Jn 3:6)

At birth we enter the earth;

without rebirth we cannot enter Heaven (Jn 3:3,5).

Nothing wrong in celebrating our Birthdays;

but Rebirthdays are a greater occasion to thank God
and celebrate His praises!

Our parents & relatives rejoice at our birth; angels dance
with jubilation in Heaven over our Rebirth! (Lk 15:7,10)

Here are a few major things we must thank God for
on our Rebirthdays —

1. Foreordination

Eph 1:4 ... *Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world*

Rev 13:8 ... Calvary is not God's after-thought.

The Lamb slain before the foundation of the world

Rom 8:29,30 ... *foreknew ... foreordained ...*

called ... justified ... glorified ...

The initiation is by God;

therefore no place for boasting — GRACE — Eph 2:8,9

I am not the “alpha;”

Jesus is the “Alpha” of my faith (Heb 12:2)

Jn 15:16 ... Jesus: *“You have not chosen Me; I've chosen you!”*

2. Background

- Parental influence - 2 Tim 1:5
grandmother ... mother ...
- Teachers' & Elders' influence
eg) Acts 22:3 ... Paul was brought up
at the feet of Gamaliel
Sunday Schools, VBS, YFC, SU, SFJ, etc.
- Church background
eg) Paul - Phil 3:4-7
circumcision Law ... zeal ...
These were "*gain*" to him (v7)

Nothing wrong with these things, but they were nothing compared to the *knowledge of Christ* (v8). We cannot depend on them for our salvation.

My Church background where I grew up in Nazareth — kneeling ... memorizing short prayers (collects), creeds ... faith confessions ... pulpit reading of the Bible ... etc.

3. The Instruments (Soulwinners)

- Jn 1:40-42a ... Andrew brought Peter to Jesus.
- Acts 8:29-40 ... Philip led the official to Christ.
- Or it might have been a Revival or Gospel meeting —
eg) Day of Pentecost
3000 saved through Peter's sermon
Cottage prayer meeting —
Family of Cornelius, Philippian Jailer, ...
- It might have been a tract which led us to Christ.

My 6th standard Class Teacher and Pre-University Class Chemistry Lecturer led me to Christ (1962). I thanked them on my every Rebirthday until they had their Homecall in 2003 and 2005 respectively.

The assurance of salvation became mine on 18 Nov 1962 while reading the book ,
“*On being a Real Christian*” by Christian Weiss.

4. Nurture/Growth

- God’s Word ... *milk* ... 1 Pet 2:1-3
Bibles, Study Aids, etc.
- God’s Family
Eph 3:18,19 ... 4-D love of God *with all saints*
Fellowships, Prayer Groups, Churches, etc.
- God’s Servants
An Apollos to water the plant (1 Cor 3:6)
Eph 4:11-13 ... *equip ... edify ... perfect man*
Pulpit, Print, Media ministries, etc.

5. Warfare

- Temptations, Failures
- Trials, Testings
- Chastisement
- Sicknesses, Problems, Crises
“*Chastened but not killed*” (2 Cor 6:9c)
“*Comfort of the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 9:31)

6. Ministry

- We must thank God for keeping us busy in His cause while there are so many *standing idle all day long*
(Mt 20:3,6).
- Blessed to bless
eg Abraham (Gen 12:2,3)
- Responsibilities in Churches & organisations
- *We are made kings and priests before God*
a) for worship/praise (1 Pet 2:5)
b) for witness/proclamation (:9)
- Thank God *who has trusted* us with a ministry
(1 Tim 1:12)

7. Family

- Mutual growth of spouses / spiritually integrated
 - a) According to Paul
 - Wife → Husband — Eph 5:22,23
 - Husband → Wife — :28,29
 - b) According to Peter
 - Wife → Husband — 1 Pet 3:1,2
 - Husband → Wife — :7
- Parents ↔ Children
 - It's in bringing up our children we learn practically how to take care of the Church (1 Tim 3:4,5)

Conclusion

Let's remember these blessings on each Rebirthday and thank God specifically. Did not God often remind His people how they were in Egypt and how He delivered and led them — especially the day of deliverance?

“Remember this day ... out of Egypt ...” (Ex 13:3)

Sing: *Happy day, Happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away!
He taught me how to watch and pray,
And live rejoicing ev'ry day;
Happy day, Happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away!*

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A Prayer for experiencing Rebirth

Almighty God,

I come to You as a wretched sinner. I have nothing good in me. Others may not know me, but You, O God, know my heart. I am not able to change myself. I am not able to improve myself. I do what I don't want to do. I have no joy. I have no peace. I am totally confused. Riches do not satisfy me. Pleasures do not satisfy me. Education does not satisfy me. Achievements and accomplishments do not satisfy me. Religion does not satisfy me. The emptiness and vacuum are only increasing in my heart day by day. I feel miserable in my life. I am a wretch.

Almighty God,

Thank You for Your love in sending Your Son, Jesus, to bear my sins and die for me on the cross. I was going away and away from You, but You came searching for me as a lost sheep. Thank You, Jesus, for Your invitation to come to You to enjoy Your rest. Thank You for Your promise that You would not chase out anyone who comes to You. I believe on You as "the" Way to God the Father. I believe on You as "the" Truth to grant me true deliverance. I believe on You as "the" Life to lead me to everlasting life.

Almighty God,

I confess that Christ the resurrected Redeemer is now the Lord of my life. He is my good Shepherd to lead me and guide me. I am ready to obey You, O Lord, in the waters of baptism. I submit myself to the authority of Your written Word. Help me not to stray from its teachings and commandments. Thank You for the promises in Your Word for my spiritual and physical wellbeing. Thank You for writing my name in Your Book of Life.

Almighty God,

You are now my Father, and I am Your child. Thank You for the joy of Salvation that's right now flooding my soul. Thank You for the peace in my heart because all my sins are forgiven. Thank You for the Holy Spirit who witnesses with my spirit that I am Your child. Lead me, O God, to a fellowship of Your children so I may grow with them in my new life. Keep me, Father, from the evil one until I enter eternity.

In Jesus' precious Name, I pray! Amen!

*(Rom 5:1,6; 7:18,24; 8:16; 10:9,10; Psa 23:1; 51:12; 119:176; 139:1,13;
Jn 1:12; 3:16; 6:37; 10:1-4,11; 14:6; Mt 3:15; 11:28; 2 Pet 1:4; Lk 7:29,30)*