

◆GOALS◆

Godly Worship Service
Raising Kingdom Workers
Evangelizing Korea
Evangelizing World
Social Service for Local Area

The Biweekly Choong Hyun

I love you, O LORD, my strength,
(Psalm 18:1)

For to me, to live is Christ
and to die is gain.
(Philippians 1:21)

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Easter Sunday 1998 Hallelujah! Christ Is Risen from the Dead! Special Music Performance by Gabriel Choir at Praise Service

Today is the day that the Lord has risen from the dead. The greatest reason for us to rejoice is His victory over death! The Bible mentions several people who rose again from the dead.

However, the resurrection of Christ is different from the resurrection of other people. He rose again from the dead by the power of God for eternal glory.

The resurrection of Jesus is the first fruit of our salvation, the model of our future glory which we will receive, and the deposit for our eternal life.

What is the most joyful day for the saints? It is Easter Day! It is because the power of darkness and the authority of sin and death are overcome by the cross of Jesus Christ. We are saved from the eternal curse and judgment "for Christ was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (Romans 4:25, NIV).

We must have a firm belief in the

resurrection of Christ. Otherwise, our faith in Him is worthless. It is very natural for us to be a witness of His resurrection. We are to go to the ends of the world to proclaim His death and resurrection and bring all people and "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Our church celebrates His resurrection, not with the splendor of previous years, but with "worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). There will be a special music program prepared by the Gabriel choir. The Lord will be glorified through their praises. There will also be a time for the entire congregation to join in praise of our glorious and risen Lord Jesus Christ. Let us open our hearts and receive Him as our resurrected Lord and Christ. Hallelujah! He is risen from the grave today! was a time to reflect on personal and corporate sins while remembering the work of our Savior on the cross of Calvary.

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An Introduction to the English Worship Service

The English Worship Service meets for Sunday worship at 9:00 at the Choong Hyun Welfare Center on floor B1. Currently, the weekly attendance is about 200. There is a special praise time at 10:30 followed by a Bible Study around 11:00. The Bible study groups are determined based primarily on approximate age. Usually, everything is completed by about 12:00.

In preparation for all of this to go smoothly, many congregation members come to church on Saturday as well. There is a Bible Study for the leaders at 1:00. The Praise Team practices around 3:00. At 5:00, there is a prayer meeting and choir practice.

Finally, the 11:00 service in the main sanctuary is simultaneously translated into English.



▲ Last year's Easter celebration

Church Economization Time for Inner Spirituality from Each Department of Church

The administration committee decided to pursue economization as we face economic crisis throughout the nation. The church expects to see our church members enthusiastically supporting this movement.

The goal for this movement is to pray for the recovery of the Korean economy and to practice frugality so that we can be an example to our neighbors as true followers of Christ. This economization can be classified into the following three areas: energy savings, supply reductions, and the savings in gifts from the church.

First, the energy savings movement includes keeping the doors closed when the air conditioning or heating is in use. Also, energy can be saved by turning off the lights and any other electronic devices when they are not in use. We can also save tap water when in the kitchen and restrooms.

Our church's average monthly electric bill in the winter is 13 million won, and 17 million won in the summer time. Perhaps one of the largest ways in which we can reduce our electricity cost is to avoid using the Mission Center elevator whenever possible. This is a very important factor in saving electricity.

Next, there are also ways in which we can save the church money by

reducing our wasteful use of various supplies. We can reduce the volume of printed materials wherever possible. Furthermore, we can also use both sides of each sheet of paper before throwing it out. When the paper is completely used, then we can put it into the recycling bin. We can also avoid the use of disposable wares such as paper cups and plates or wooden chopsticks.

Our church has tried to overcome an extravagant food culture which has alleviated the situation, but there is still a lot of food being wasted in the trash can at the end of each Sunday. As a nation, we are wasting about 8 trillion won worth of food each year.

Lastly, savings in gifts for joy and compassion includes wedding and funeral gifts. We do not need to make "Thank You" cards after weddings and funerals. Rather, we can make use of the Weekly Choong Hyun for these kinds of general advertisements and messages of appreciation.

The people of God ought to give thanks to Him for everything He has granted to us, and we are responsible to make wise use of our God-given resources. As image bearers of Christ, we must lead the nation in its economic recovery by showing the love of Christ to our neighbors.

Change of Time Wednesday Night Service 7:30 PM from April 1

The Worship Service Committee has decided to change the time for the Wednesday night service from 7:00 to 7:30 as of April 1. This will allow more of the church members to be able to arrive on time without feeling rushed into service after a long day's work.

Now, more people should be able to come to the worship service at least ten minutes before the beginning of the worship service in order to prepare their hearts for the worship.

Good Friday

Some of the members of our English Worship Service got together this past Friday in Room 301 of the Mission Center building.

They spent a couple of hours in a candlelight service reading from the Scripture, praying, and singing as they remembered the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was a time to reflect on

Message 1 by Reverend Sung Kwan Kim



The Gentile's Confession

(Zechariah 8:23)

Zechariah anticipated the day when the door of salvation would be opened to non-Jews. He predicted that many nations would worship the Lord with the Jewish nation in the heavenly Jerusalem. They will take hold of the robe of a Jew and say, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you" (Zc. 8:23). Today's Scripture passage reveals the future fulfillment of God's saving love for both Jew and Gentile. It forces believing Gentiles to confess, with biblical accuracy and deep sincerity, the universal desire for God's people to come together in Christ.

We remember how God calls the Jews out of slavery and makes His covenant with them at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19:4-6). Here they become God's people (a holy nation and royal priesthood) and He becomes their God (cf. Lv. 26:12). He gives them the Promised Land (Jos. 1:2-3) and makes David king in Jerusalem (2 Sa. 5:3).

To the grief of the prophets, the story continues with God's people breaking His covenant. God's judgments on their sin sends the nation into captivity, although His presence remains with them (Ezk. 11:16, 23). Through the prophets, God promises to renew and restore His people (Ez. 11:19; Ho. 1:9-11; etc.). Jesus comes not only as the promised Messiah, but as Immanuel (Mt. 1:23). He calls His disciples and establishes His assembly (Lk. 6:13). After His resurrection and ascension, the coming of the Holy Spirit establishes the New Covenant and fulfills the promise to Abraham and makes believing Gentiles Abraham's seed (Ga. 3:14,29).

This great story helps us appreciate the roots from which we come. Gentiles realize that all Jews are recognized as the religious teachers of mankind. To Jews we owe the New Testament as well as the Old Testament writings.

Long before the Christian church, the synagogues of the Jew were lights shining in a world of pagan darkness (Is. 42:6; 49:6). Their missionary function was not unlike our own. They were to be God's witnesses (Is. 43:12). Their assemblies later became the bridge over which the knowledge of

God and Christ passed to Gentiles. From them came the Savior of mankind and the remnant (early apostles) of the Christian faith.

In the history of revelation, the Jews represent the church of the Messiah. The Old Testament explodes with the prophecies foretelling of the coming of the Messiah and His eternal blessing of Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, Jesus of Nazareth presented Himself as the promised Messiah. In Jerusalem the same Jesus offered Himself as the one perfect sacrifice for the sins of mankind. In Jerusalem, He rose from the dead, ascended to the father, and inaugurated the kingdom of God on

have been shown mercy because of their [Jews] disobedience, so these [Jews] also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. For God has shut up all [Jew and Gentile] in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all (Rm. 11:30-32).

God has not forgotten His people, the Jews, and His promises to them. He is in a unique covenantal relationship with them. God refers to Himself as their Husband (Jr. 31:33), and to them as His precious possession whom He had brought to Himself, implying they were His bride (Ex. 19:4-

to be His people. We need a deep relationship with God that produces real happiness and makes others (most especially Jews) jealous. We need hearts that give back compassion and gratitude and that reveal God's mercy.

When Christ returns, the final festival assembly will welcome the believing Gentiles with the redeemed Jews (Is. 2:2-4, etc.). This time is yet future but possibly not far away when 'all Israel shall be saved' (Rm. 11:26) and Zechariah's prophecy will have more literal fulfillment. Some see in the modern Zionists movement and the restoration of the state of Israel, signs that the ultimate fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy may be at our very door.

So we must never forget that it was the captivity that purified the Jews and brought about this universal religion. In His justice the Lord cut down the cedar of Israel's pride, but from the remaining stump there grew a shoot that became a mighty tree, an insignia to which the nations gather. By God's grace, those who were covenant-breaking Jews or Gentiles outside the covenant, are made the people of God and receive mercy in Christ. If God set aside the Jews for their unbelief, He could do the same to Gentiles for their pride (Rm. 11:21-22). That is why we need this Gentile confession of 'Let us go with you for we heard that God is with you,' to humble us and to bring us to obedience in His Word.

God's people share a universal desire to be with Him in glory! Christians (believing Jews and Gentiles) have the way, truth, and life within them. God has given us a new covenant in His crucified Son. By entering the New Covenant by faith, we have foretasted the heavenly Jerusalem. Christians are now the salt and the light of the world (Mt. 5:13-16). Let us shake our salt not just to preserve but to season the world. Let us shine our light as brightly and as intensely as we can, so that all the world sees God's merciful love and may glorify Him. Let us confess that through God's wisdom, knowledge and judgment, the hope of all God's chosen people is Jesus Christ!

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earth. In Jerusalem the Holy Spirit descended on a Jewish festival day and began His mighty work of convicting the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. Surely, Jerusalem which is above is the mother of us all (Ga. 4:26).

The earthly city of Jerusalem was the spiritual dwelling of God for the Jews. It was their promised land in which their royal dynasty was blessed forever in Christ. It became the heavenly city and spiritual dwelling of God for both Jew and Gentile when in Jerusalem the temple curtain was split and the Holy of Holies, the former center of Old Covenant, was opened to the New Covenant.

The Apostle Paul reveals the mysterious circular nature of God's plan of salvation, "For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now

6). This covenantal or spiritual marriage relationship is a bond of life and love God cannot and would not break. He does not divorce the Jews but sends them away for a time (Is. 50:1). They have assured security in the love, goodness, and faithfulness of God. After the full number of Gentiles have been incorporated into the church, all the Jews of God's sovereign selection (Rm. 9:6) will be regathered, judged, restored to favor, and redeemed in Christ (Rm. 11). Their temporary and partial hardening of hearts is for our benefit.

The mystery of God's one plan of salvation has been granted to us (Mt. 13:11). We are lucky! We need to appreciate God's grace in this situation. We need a strong relationship with God that reflects His universal aim for both Jew and Gentile

Message 2 by Reverend Sung Kwan Kim

The Death and Resurrection of the Judean Monarchy

(Ezekiel 17:1-24)

God is always loyal. His seed provides eternal life for all who have faith. The death of the Judean monarchy resulted from its own planting. The resurrection of the Judean monarchy resulted from God's planting which is eternal.

Isaiah and Jeremiah directly prophesied to God's people regarding the final collapse of Jerusalem and the Messiah's everlasting deliverance. God had Ezekiel use a different approach - indirect prophecy to His people in the form of a parable about two eagles and a vine. Although the direct message was heard time and time again, God's people did not give it the attention it deserved. By presenting the same message in an allegory, the parable was intended to interest its listeners and hopefully open their eyes to God's revelations. The meaning of God's hidden truth found in Ezekiel 17 offers us a wonderful message concerning God's almighty power and unending mercy.

The chapter opens with Ezekiel telling us, "The word of the Lord came to me: 'Son of man, set forth an allegory and tell the house of Israel a parable'" (vss. 1-2). The parable is structured in two separate allegories. The first allegory (vss. 3-10 and vss. 22-24) is abstract and requires more thought to interpret; wherein the second allegory (vss. 11-21) is concrete, more detailed, and self-explanatory. An example of their differences is someone saying "good morning" to a Spanish person who knows very little English; whereas "buenos dias" is better understood. The combination of both allegories produces an exact historical representation of God's plan for man's eternal salvation. A similar parable is also found in Judges 9:8-15, 2 Kings 14:9 pictures another tree story depicting a true story of man's rebellious nature against God and its consequences.

The story begins, "Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: A great eagle with powerful wings, long feathers and full plumage of varied colors came to Lebanon, taking hold of the top of a cedar'" (vs. 3). This great eagle represents the great power of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The detailed physical description of the eagle denotes the strong and various powers of the king. The location of Lebanon refers to Jerusalem. The cedar tree was a popular tree for the mountain capital

of Lebanon. It was the same wood from the same location that Solomon used to build God's temple. It is reference to God's Davidic line; in particular it signifies the royal seed of King Jehoiachin of Judah. The action of the eagle represents King Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Jerusalem and his siege of King Jehoiachin. The following verse, "he broke off its topmost shoot and carried it away to a land of merchants, where he planted it in a city of traders" (vs. 4), refers to King Nebuchadnezzar's imprisonment of King Jehoiachin and his people in Babylon.

"He took some of the seed of your land and put it in fertile soil. He planted it like a willow by abundant water, and it sprouted and became a low, spreading vine. Its branches turned toward him but its roots remained under it. So it became a vine and produced branches and put out leafy boughs" (vss. 5-6). King Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah the new king of Jerusalem. He made a treaty with him and placed him under oath. He also took away all the leading men of Jerusalem so that it could not rise against him.

From a human standpoint, King Nebuchadnezzar's clever undertakings appear full-proof. "But there was another great eagle with powerful wings and full plumage. The vine now sent out its roots toward him from the plot where it was planted and stretched out its branches to him for water. It had been planted in good soil by abundant water so that it would produce branches, bear fruit and become a splendid vine" (vss. 7-8). The other great eagle is the king of Egypt. Zedekiah broke his treaty with King Nebuchadnezzar by seeking to join forces with the King of Egypt. He also broke his oath which means he invited retribution from God in whose name he made the oath.

The consequences of Zedekiah's actions was death. It was common knowledge that Egypt was not to be the source of any help. "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but

do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord. Yet he too is wise and can bring disaster; he does not take back his words. He will rise up against the house of the wicked, against those who help evildoers. But the Egyptians are men and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit. When the Lord stretches out his hand, he who helps will stumble, he who is helped will fall; both will perish together" (Isa. 31:1-3). The Egyptians were a powerful nation but not more powerful than God. If Israel required help, their requests needed to be addressed to God and not to men.

Now comes the riddle, "Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Will it thrive? Will it not be uprooted and stripped of its fruit so that it withers? All its new growth will wither. It will not take a strong army or many people to pull it up by the roots. Even if it is transplanted, will it thrive? Will it not wither completely when the east wind strikes it - wither away in the plot where it grew?' " (vss. 9-10). God is asking His people to stop and think. Is a king more powerful than He? Can man produce something everlasting? Can those who go against God succeed?

Jehoiachin, King of Judah was of royal seed. "I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine?" (Jer. 2:21). Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's uncle, was chosen by King Nebuchadnezzar to rule Jerusalem. "Do not plant two kinds of seed in your vineyard; if you do, not only the crops you plant but also the fruit of the vineyard will be defiled" (Deut. 22:9).

Zedekiah broke God's oath and His covenant. The Babylonians not only killed all his sons in front of him but they also put out his eyes afterward and took him prisoner in Babylon. All the high priests and keepers of God's temple were executed. The Babylonians captured and destroyed Jerusalem. All the remnant fled or went into captivity, away from their land. King Jehoiachin, after thirty-seven years, was finally released from prison and served at the table of the king of Babylon until his death.

The tragedy of Judah's destruction opened the doors to a positive future to which Ezekiel and earlier prophets lent credence. "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will take a shoot from the very top of a cedar and plant it; I will break off a tender spring from its topmost shoots and plant it on a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain heights of Israel I will plant it; it will produce branches and bear fruit and become a splendid cedar. Birds of every kind will nest in it; they will find shelter in the shade of its branches" (vss. 22-23). God's power created a cedar tree, and an everlasting king, Jesus Christ. Although Jerusalem died, God returned to life its purpose through Christ.

God's covenant with King David was eternally established in Jesus Christ (1 Chron. 17:11-14). King David was the first farmer, and God, through Christ, is the final farmer. God's permanent planting provides blessings for all, not just a certain kind. "All the trees of the field will know that I the Lord bring down the tall tree and make the low tree grow tall. I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it" (vs. 24). This is a direct statement of God's character. This is who God is! God's sovereign power of reversal is found throughout the Bible: "The Lord sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts" (1 Sam. 2:7); "But it is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another" (Psalm 75:7); God works in mysterious ways - ways not always familiar to us. We have a tendency to prefer the outwardly strong; God prefers the weak, soft, and tender ones.

Judah was not able to continue its existence on its own. Zedekiah was disloyal to Jehoiachin. Zedekiah was disloyal to God. Never the less, God promised David a permanent line. God is always loyal. He planted a real soft seed that grew into one the most eminent of trees. His seed provides eternal life for all who have faith. The death of the Judean monarchy resulted from its own planting. The resurrection of the Judean monarchy resulted from God's planting which is eternal.

Mission Briefing : Nigeria

Let us Evangelize Nigeria with the Wisdom of the Lord

The area of Nigeria is 942,999 square kilometers, and most of its northern lands is covered by the Sahara Desert. Their economy is not in great shape, but their natural resources are bountiful. Nigeria is the world's seventh greatest oil producer. 80% of the nation's economy depends on oil exports, but most of their land is still undeveloped. Furthermore, the political leaders of Nigeria are not masters of fiscal policy, thereby further impoverishing the country.

The population of Nigeria in 1995 was just over 100 million. They can be divided into 426 different ethnic groups. Their literacy is slightly over 50%. English is the official language. This is because they were under British colonial rule until 1960. Religious and

political strife in Nigeria made her post-independence history violent.

In Nigeria, there were six coups in the last twenty years, and protests against the government in order to achieve freedom and democracy are continuing even to this day. Throughout the northern parts of Nigeria, Islam comprises 40% of the total population. In the southern parts, Christian farmers are the predominant presence. Protestants make up about 26%. Traditional religion makes up about 10%, and the Catholics make up 13%.

Between the Muslims and the Protestants, there has been major political tension and violence. As the government gravitates toward the Muslim position, Christian persecution and grievances are being



overlooked. In particular, the Christians who live in the northern parts suffer from violence and theft. Many Christians are also killed. Furthermore, northern Muslims continuously try to restrict people from traveling in order to contain the spread of the gospel.

The spiritual situation in Nigeria has many dangers, including heresies which were introduced by highly educated people. Christianity has been mixed with the traditional religion of Nigeria which causes spiritual chaos. This is a frustrating situation. An even greater problem is that many Protestant preachers are not living their lives as they are teaching; they are not good examples. A number of preachers are classified as rich people which also hinders the propagation of the gospel in Nigeria.

Nevertheless, there is hope for the church in Nigeria. Nigeria is the first country on the African continent to send missionaries abroad. As a result, there are more than 40,000 Christian

students who are evangelizing in over 300 college campuses throughout the country. The Christian students' movement is having an effective ministry in reaching Nigerians throughout the country. Even Muslim students convert to Christianity through the witness of these young students. Most of them also go into society in different areas to witness.

Furthermore, the Nigerian church has sent over 240 missionaries all over the world. The goal for the Nigerian church is to evangelize 75% of its total population by the year 2000. Christian literature is desperately needed, but the price for printing machines and paper is so expensive that publishing ministries are not highly effective in Nigeria.

We have to remember that Nigeria is a key state in Africa. So, the devil contests every gospel advance. We must pray for Nigeria so that they can be a priestly nation for the entire continent of Africa. (Patrick Johnstone's *Operation World* 5th edition, 1993)

Prayer Topics for Nigeria:

1. Let us give thanks to God for raising native Christian leaders and preachers who are leading the churches and other Christian organizations.
2. Let us pray for the Christian leaders in Nigeria so that they may grow up in the knowledge of God in order to make disciples of Jesus according to the Word of God.
3. Let us pray for the Bible colleges which can produce many pastors who can deliver the gospel with the proper theological training, and allow for a revival among the Nigerian churches.
4. Let us pray for campus ministries in Nigerian universities so that it may continue to bring many young people to Christ. Through this ministry, young Christians of Nigeria can be ambassadors of Christ, not just for Nigeria, but for the African continent as a whole.
5. Let us pray for the Nigerian church so that they will be able to overcome conflicts with the Muslims. Let them be the salt and light in Nigeria so that they may proclaim the power of the Living Word of God. A special prayer is required for the pastors of Nigerian churches so that they can be good examples to others.

The Necessity for Mission

Samuel Park

(Pastor for the 7th Grade Group, Assistant Director for Choong Hyun Publishing)

We must meditate on the last words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:18b-20). This is the great commission of Jesus to each of us. Therefore, mission is not an option, but a requirement for each Christian.

Mission must be God-centered evangelization rather than man-centered or method-centered. World mission is primarily God's work and it will be completed by God Himself, whether we participate or not. However, God does not do His Kingdom work without his servants. God is giving us a great chance to be a

part of his work. It is our privilege to join in his ministry. Mission is not something in which we are assisting God in order to accomplish His will. Rather, mission is our chance to earn the crown when we see Jesus in the Kingdom of God. Let our church's mission be God-centered mission.



Kingdom Information

Books for Missionaries' Kids

The Mission Committee is sending books to the children of missionaries who are on the front lines of the spiritual battle to expand the Kingdom of God. Most missionaries are scattered around the uncivilized world where even the most basic of educational facilities are unavailable. These books will provide them a basic foundation necessary for their education. As you donate books, please remember that these books will help these children to remember their mother country, language, and culture.

You can take part in the ministry of God's kingdom by providing books for the children of these missionaries' kids. For further information, please call 552-8200 (ext. 356) and ask for the World Mission Committee.

Type of Books: beneficial for the education and enjoyment of junior and senior high school students
Receiving Office: Office of World Mission Committee (Mission Center Building #406)