



Listen
God's
Whispers

Lee Bee Teik

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by Lee Bee Teik

Print Edition Information

LISTEN TO GOD'S WHISPERS

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Introduction

Many Christians in our nation today are getting busier in the midst of increasing pressures to perform in order to conform to standards dictated by friends or foes. With a hastening pace of living also comes higher levels of noise and sounds that affect our lives. Though we may try to avoid external noises such as those from nearby construction sites, inner noises inaudible to our ears are more difficult to handle. Some of these noises of disturbed consciences and inner hurts refuse to leave us alone.

The intention of this book is to remind the readers that there may be a number of precious messages that we could have missed while living through the pressures of each day. These messages come from the God who loves us more than anyone else who has loved us, who loves us now or who will ever love us. The author hopes that as each passage and Bible meditation is read attentively, the readers will once more hear God for themselves and continue to hunger and thirst after Him in their daily lives; for it is in Him that we live, move and have our being.

Home Is Where Jesus Is

On the first night of a 5-day quiet retreat with a small group of friends, I missed my husband and our 3 children deeply. Just before I slept, the Lord asked me lovingly, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

I replied, "Lord, I want to go home..."

Immediately, He said, "All right, you are home!"

I was surprised and queried, "What do you mean?"

He then explained to me, "Where I am is home...and I am here with you."

Thus He imprinted in my heart that night not to think of home as the place where my late parents used to live or where my present family gather. Wherever He is present is my home and He will never leave me or forsake me, I know.

MEDITATION

Hebrews 13:5

"...God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'"

As 13 of us were worshipping the Lord in silence except for background instrumental music, He surprised me with a mental picture of our enjoying a ballroom dance together! Of course, I was overjoyed and prayed in my heart,

“O Lord, You know how much I loved to dance in my school days and how I long to dance again! Yet, I have little opportunity to dance now because my husband has no affinity for dancing! How You understand my make-up, O Lord, how You love me enough to convey my oneness with You through music and dance! I thank You, my Lord! I love You!”

MEDITATION

Psalm 30:11-12

“You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to You and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever.”

Psalm 149:3-4

“Let them praise His name with dancing and make music to Him with tambourine and harp. For the Lord takes delight in His people; He crowns the humble with salvation.”

3

Your Love, My Love, God's Love

Your love reassures me of God's unfailing acceptance of me; I hope that my love for you expresses His friendship with you.

MEDITATION

John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

John 15:14

"You are My friends if you do what I command."

Matthew 25:40

"...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me."

Shepherd's Language

A missionary in modern Cyprus shares:

As I observe the life of sheep with their shepherd all around us, I have noticed that as a sheep grows, it learns the language of its shepherd...his voice, his gestures, his behaviour.

When the shepherd knocks his rod on a hard surface, his sheep hear the knockings and come running up to him. They know that his presence means safety, food, drink and shelter from the rain or scorching heat.

When a little lamb loses its way, that same sound speaks of home and rest as it bounces in frisky steps back to the source of the sound...its Master and its Friend.

MEDITATION

Psalm 23:4

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Shepherd and Sheep

In order to understand Jesus our Good Shepherd, we need to be willing to become His sheep. Too often, we try to behave like His assistant shepherds without first learning to live as His sheep.

MEDITATION

John 10:2-4

“The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognise a stranger’s voice’...but they did not understand what he was telling them.”

6

God Prunes Good Things

Sometimes God prunes our good branches in order that more branches will bear more fruit. He does not only prune bad branches.

Therefore, do not keep your good things from Him.

MEDITATION

John 15:1-2

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in Me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”

He Whispers Gently

Since God usually speaks gently and softly, how are we to hear Him in the hustle and bustle of our days unless we quieten ourselves?

MEDITATION

1 Kings 19:9-13

"...And after the fire came a gentle whisper... 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'"

Psalm 23:2

"...He leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul."

Mark 1:35

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed."

My Cup Overflows

Due to the breadth of its mouth, a sheep can only drink from a cup which is filled to its brim and overflowing. David, the experienced shepherd boy, writes,

“....my cup overflows....”

He means that his God not only understands all his needs but will supply them in a way that ensures that he can receive His provision. He does not dangle a carrot to trick us in our time of need. Instead, He comes near enough to us to make sure that we actually drink the water from His special cup.

MEDITATION

Psalm 23:5-6

“...You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows...”

If we do not learn to hear Him in the routines of daily life, we may not be able to hear Him in our times of crises.

MEDITATION

Genesis 18:1, 33

"The Lord appeared to *Abraham* near the great trees of Mamre while he *was sitting at the entrance* to his tent in the heat of the day...When the Lord had finished speaking with Abraham, He left, and Abraham returned home."

Genesis 22:1, 11

"Some time later *God tested Abraham*. He said to him, 'Abraham!' 'Here I am,' he replied...But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, 'Abraham! Abraham!' 'Here I am,' he replied."

Luke 1:8-13

"Once when Zechariah's division was *on duty* and he was *serving* as priest before God, he was chosen *by lot*, according to the custom of the priesthood... Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him...When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard...'"

Walking With Him

Walking with Jesus invigorates me! Smile, He is watching you!!

MEDITATION

Proverbs 8:30-31

"Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in His presence, rejoicing in His whole world and delighting in mankind."

As Jesus is our Friend, so are we to be to one another in Him, whether we always feel we like each other or not. To love our friends is to understand and do good to them, not merely feeling good about them.

MEDITATION

John 15:12-15

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learnt from My Father I have made known to you.”

See Him In Clarity

On the gentle care of our fellow human beings, we see Him clearly.

MEDITATION

John 13:3-7

“...He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around Him...Jesus replied, ‘You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand.’”

John 13:12

“Do you understand what I have done for you?...I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you...Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”

13

No Condemnation ...Just Love

One night, I was exhausted and overburdened with a deep sense of guilt - false and real. Prayers could not be expressed to Him; eyes could not read His word.

Then, as I climbed into my bed, God put me to restful sleep with these words...

"No condemnation...just love...and love...and love..."

I literally felt as if I was crawling on to my heavenly Father's lap and cuddling into sweet slumber in His loving arms...I sobbed like a little child, hurt by the happenings too complicated for me to understand... and fell asleep while a voice in me echoed:

"He gives to His beloved sleep."

MEDITATION

Psalm 127:2

"...for He grants sleep to those He loves."

Romans 8:1-4

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus..."

John 3:16-17

"...For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him."

As I saw and heard a sister in Christ kneel and pray to her Father again, after agonising years of bitterness and anger at Him, my heart sang with joy and thanksgiving to the Lord of all!

"Father, it is such a great privilege to stand back and watch Your work of patient covenant love in one more prodigal child in Christ, for to pray again is to love again!"

MEDITATION

Luke 15:17-24

"When he came back to his senses, he said, 'I will set out and go back to my father and say to him...' ...But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him."

God Uses Dreams

Sometimes God uses dreams to keep us from falling into dangers or temptations.

MEDITATION

Genesis 31:22-29

“Then God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night....”

Matthew 2:13-15

“When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream....”

The Written Word To The Living Word

The purpose of the written word is to lead us to Jesus Christ the living Word who, through His Holy Spirit within us, is able to save and transform us into His likeness.

MEDITATION

Luke 24:27

“And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself.”

John 5:39

“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have life.”

17 — Truth and Grace are Greater Than Man's Attitudes and Deeds

Brethren, do not allow others' unkind opinions and actions to overshadow God's love, joy and peace in you...because His truth and grace are far greater than men's attitudes and deeds.

MEDITATION

Hebrews 13:6

"So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my Helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?'"

Romans 12:9-21

"....Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer...."

To See Is To Intercede

To see the Gethsemane scene in someone else is to hear God's call to intercede until that person's prayer shifts from:

"...if it is possible, do not let me go through this awful experience..."

to:

"Nevertheless, not my will, Father, but Yours be done."

MEDITATION

Colossians 1:10

"And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God..."

The Message of Gethsemane

*U*ltimately, the message of Gethsemane is:

- * To be open to God our Father about our weaknesses and feelings in our communion with Him
- * To be secure in God's fatherly love and faithfulness
- * To entrust our whole life to Him completely
- * To depend entirely upon His mercy and love to uphold us
- * To do God's will only in God's ways

MEDITATION

Matthew 26:36-44

"Then Jesus went with His disciples to a place called Gethsemane...."

Allowed To Choose

As I pondered over the differences in the three groups of people in the Garden of Gethsemane (eight at a distance away, three nearer to Him and Jesus the Son of Man), I asked the Lord this question:

“Master, whose shoes am I in?” Amazingly, He replied, “You choose!”

MEDITATION

Joshua 24:15

“...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Jesus Had Mixed Emotions

R.S. Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of Man had mixed emotions like we have...but He did not allow those feelings to affect His decision-making process.

MEDITATION

Luke 22:42-43

“‘Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will but Yours be done.’ An angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him. And being in anguish, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.”

Jesus' Second Prayer

When Jesus prayed a second time in the Garden of Gethsemane, His prayer focus had shifted from the negative perspective:

“...if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me...”

to the positive perspective:

“...if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may Your will be done.”

And we may almost hear Him add,

“Therefore, My Father, help Me, I pray...” as He wept in sorrow and dread of the cross.

This event leaves us wondering whether or not Christ's victory over sin, death and Satan actually commenced in Gethsemane, though it was completed on the cross and at His resurrection.

MEDITATION

Matthew 26:39

“...My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will...”

Matthew 26:42

“...My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may Your will be done...”

Matthew 26:44

“...Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

To Bypass Or To Submit

Looking at the conditions of our lives at home, in church and in society, one wonders whether or not we make more effort praying that we may bypass God's will for us than that we may do what He has already revealed to us??

P.S. Jesus prayed **once** to avoid His death on the cross for sinful men and women like us, but **twice** to submit to His Father's will for Him. If it was uphill for Him till the end, how much more is it for us?

Maybe we should consider praying **once** that we may avoid His will and a **hundred** times thereafter that we **will** be enabled to do His will for us.

MEDITATION

Matthew 26:39-44

"Then Jesus went with His disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and He said to them,

'Sit here while I go over there and pray.'...

Then He said to them,

'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with Me.'...

Then he returned to His disciples and found them sleeping.

'Could you men not keep watch with Me for one hour?'...

He went away a *second time* and prayed...

When He came back, He again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So He left them and went away once more and prayed the *third time, saying the same thing.*"

Peter aggressively tried to do Jesus' job for Him but forgot to fulfil his own!

MEDITATION

Matthew 26:33, 35, 37-38, 40, 43, 45, 51-54

“...Even if all fall away on account of You, I never will...Even if I have to die with You, I will never disown You...’ Then He returned to His disciples and found them sleeping...When He came back, He again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy...”

Do You Wonder?

Do you wonder why Jesus gave more specific instructions to the eight disciples who were further from Him than to the three closer to Him in Matthew 26:36,38?

Perhaps it is because the more we know Him the more creative we will be in our efforts to please Him, as more of His mind has been formed in us and more of His heart has touched ours.

MEDITATION

Jeremiah 29:13

“You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart. I will be found by you...” declares the Lord.”

John 12:3-4, 7-8

“Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume...Judas objected... ‘Leave her alone,’ Jesus replied. ‘...you will not always have Me.’”

26 Individualism in Exchange For Identity and Personality

On any meaningful relationship, each person loses her husk of individualism but gains her identity as a human being who is made in the image of God... having a personality that is able to communicate intimately with another person in community. Hence, she discovers her deeper identity.

"Individuality counterfeits personality as lust counterfeits love. God designed human nature for Himself; individuality debases human nature for itself." - *Oswald Chambers*

[Note: The older usage of the word "individuality" in above quote has today's usage of the word "individualism", which means "egoism".]

MEDITATION

Matthew 16:24-25

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.'"

John 17:22

"I have given them the glory that you gave Me, that they may be one as We are one..."

Dwelling In The Great "I Am"

Knowing that we belong to the great "I AM" is to dwell secure in His unchanging identity!

MEDITATION

Genesis 1:26-28; 5:1-2

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness'..."

Exodus 3:14

"God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Isaiah 43:1-2

"... 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are Mine...I am the Lord your God...your Saviour.'"

It's Time To Move On

When God says to us,

"Come on, it's time to move on..."

He takes us personally by our hands and provides everything that is necessary for that trip.

MEDITATION

Matthew 4:19, 20

"...Come, follow Me...and I will make you fishers of men."

Matthew 6:25-34

"Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life...what you will eat or drink...or...wear...Your heavenly Father knows that you need them."

Philippians 4:13, 19

"And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

The Parable Of A Traffic Jam

To persuade someone to follow God's will can be really traumatic for the persuader, especially if he is of a sensitive temperament. It would be difficult for him to pray that suffering be allowed, when necessary, in order that God may awaken the other person to His truth and grace.

I usually choose to wait and see first before I have the courage to call out "Hi, Friend, you are heading in the wrong direction!" I think the parable of the Traffic Jam describes the dilemma of a backslider well...

Once upon a time, there was a long queue of miles of vehicles along the Federal Highway. Henry was one of those resigned to take his turn in the line of cars and lorries because he could not do otherwise. At least, once the jam cleared, he would be home for a yummy dinner and a warm soak in the long bath.

As he was almost dozing off at the wheel of his Proton Wira, he was suddenly awakened by the spluttering of a helicopter hovering over his car. Henry put his head out of the window to take a look and was even more surprised that the pilot, a road traffic

controller, was waving to him and thundering in a booming voice, "Hey there, Henry...you are heading in the opposite direction from your house! You missed the turn-off a mile away!"

Wide awake by then and realising that it was Viji his neighbour up in the helicopter, Henry shouted back, "What do I do now! From where you are, can you see exactly where I am? How can I get back on the right track?"

"Henry!" boomed Viji again, "Wait till you get to the next turn-off, make a U-Turn and go straight on in the direction from which you came as fast as you can...there's no jam there...and join the next freeway! You'll be home in minutes...All the best!"

Well, it is now up to Henry to believe Viji and take action, or continue to wait in the queue till he discovers his friend was right after all. But he would be really exhausted by then...no dinner, no warm bath...

MEDITATION

Jeremiah 3:22

"...Return, faithless people; I will cure you of backsliding."

"Yes, we will come to You, for You are the Lord our God."

Ezekiel 37:23

"They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses,

for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be My people, and I will be their God.”

Galatians 6:1

“Brothers, if someone is caught in sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.”

Frustration Through Wrong Expectations

We must be careful not to expect from others (including parents, spouses and children) or self what only Christ can be to us. Ultimately, all security and comfort comes from God!

MEDITATION

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our trouble, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.”

To read the Scriptures and sense our hearts burning within us as He speaks to our listening ears is joy unspeakable indeed!

MEDITATION

Luke 24:27, 32, 52

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself...‘Were not our hearts burning within us while He talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?’ ...Then they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.”

The Master Knows Better

When Jesus' disciples obeyed Him by throwing out their fishing nets where He told them to, He gave them 153 large fishes, more than what they achieved all by themselves the whole night long... Therefore, as our Master, Jesus, sees our genuine earthly needs, He will provide us with more than what we can ever earn by ourselves. In fact, knowing that we are tired, He may even cook breakfast for us just as He did for Peter and his friends.

MEDITATION

John 21:5-12

"...Friends, haven't you any fish?...Throw your net on the right of your boat and you will find some...Bring some of the fish you have just caught...Come and have breakfast..."

When The Master Pretends

When the Lord Jesus pretends to be ignorant, don't talk too much! Instead, listen - for He may have something precious to say to you!

MEDITATION

Luke 24:17-19, 25-27

"...What are you discussing together as you walk along?...What things?..." And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself."

When our Lord pretends to wave good-bye, be a true Asian...invite Him in for a drink. You may yet be surprised by joy - like we were!

Signed
Cleopas and friend

MEDITATION

Luke 24:28-31

“As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if He were going farther. But they urged Him strongly, ‘Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.’ So He went in to stay with them...Then their eyes were opened and they recognised Him...”

One morning, as I prepared to partake of the Lord's supper with my brethren at a retreat, the Saviour met me at the table with bread and "wine", knelt beside me with His arms over my shoulder and gently said,

"My beloved one, do not feel unworthy to sup with Me. Remember, what you couldn't do for yourself I have done for you on the cross. I am not only your Saviour and Lord, I am your Brother too. Am I not totally worthy of your trust and dependence on Me to care for you always?

Come, My sister, eat of this bread and drink of this wine in remembrance of Me till I come again with My angels to take you to our Father's house!"

MEDITATION

Luke 22:14-20

"...I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

Luke 24:30

"When He was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them."

The harmony within our inner and outer lives has been so damaged that when God intervenes with His healing grace, our moods might take time to shift from an all-time low to neutral before they soar to heights of exuberant joy!

Nevertheless, God is so patient with us. Therefore, let us be patient with ourselves as we plod on in this process towards everlasting joy in Him!

MEDITATION

Hebrews 12:1-3

"...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him..."

Hidden For A Purpose

To spend resources of time, energy and expenses for prolonged periods of quietness with God seems a great waste to many Christians today unless they are able to see that God sometimes wants His children to be hidden for a Purpose.

Remember Moses in Midian...David with the sheep...Jesus in the wilderness...Paul in Arabia...John on the island of Patmos...

MEDITATION

Isaiah 43:1-7

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you...When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned..."

Luke 5:15-16

"...crowds of people came to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."

Philippians 3:10

"I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death..."

2 Corinthians 3:18

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

When You Cannot Sleep

Of the Lord allows us to be awake at night, He might be asking us to change our minds over certain decisions we have made. So, the next time this happens to you, why not ask Him what it's all about...but be ready to consider His alternatives.

MEDITATION

Psalm 42:8

“By day the Lord directs His love, at night His song is with me...”

Psalm 77:6-20

“I remember my songs in the night. My heart mused and my spirit inquired: ‘Will the Lord reject forever? Will He never show His favour again? Has His unfailing love vanished forever? Has His promise failed for all time? Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has He in anger withheld His compassion?’...Then I thought, ‘To this I will appeal...I will remember...I will meditate...and consider...You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.’”

Luke 6:12

“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.”

Sanctification, like spiritual formation, is a life-long process on earth, not an instant cure for all problems.

MEDITATION

Romans 12:1-2

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is - His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

When I learn to obey God in love, it does not mean that He has stolen my heart; my heart has merely been returned to its legitimate owner.

Really, we will have no rest until we learn to rest in Him.

MEDITATION

Deuteronomy 6:5

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”

Joshua 22:5

“But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you: to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, to obey His commands, to hold fast to Him and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul.”

Psalms 119:32-35

“I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free....Direct me in the paths of Your commands, for there I find delight.”

Think About These Things

Jesus, the Lamb of God sacrificed, became the Good Shepherd;

Jesus, whose poor parents were rejected by busy hoteliers, became the King of kings!

MEDITATION

Philippians 2:5-18

"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross. Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father..."

It Takes A Lifetime

To be born again in the Lord may just take a moment but to prepare to meet with Him face to face takes a lifetime.

MEDITATION

Philippians 2:12-13

“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.”

Revelation 19:6-8

“...For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready...”

Repentance is like getting disentangled from the webs of our past habits, thoughts and words so that we may freely soar in God's will.

MEDITATION

John 3:6-8

"Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at My saying, 'You must be born again...'"

Acts 2:36-39

"Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.' When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptised, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call.'"

Don't Argue But Discuss

☞ We've come to learn that when the holy God speaks, we don't argue! Nevertheless, He allows us to discuss till His thoughts become our thoughts and His ways, our ways.

MEDITATION

Exodus 3:7-4:18

"The Lord said...But Moses said to God...And God said...Moses said to God...God said to Moses...God also said to Moses...Moses answered...Then the Lord said to him...Moses said to the Lord...The Lord said to him...But Moses said...Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses..."

Luke 1:11-22

"Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him... the angel said to him...Zechariah asked the angel, 'How can I be sure of this?...' The angel answered, '...And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at the proper time.'...When he came out, he could not speak to them..."

Only What We Have

God requires of us only what we can afford...and that would be as valuable to Him as another person's gift, whether it be a talent, time, money, property or energy, if it comes from the giver's heart.

MEDITATION

Luke 21:1-4

"...I tell you the truth...this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

John 6:5-13

"...Where shall we buy bread for all these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him...Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?...Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish..."

☉ Lord, to watch You pick someone up from the broken world of abuse, neglect, rejection, addictions, malnutrition...and nurse them to a discovery of Your gracious Fatherhood is like watching the miraculous creation of a baby in his mother's womb!

MEDITATION

Psalm 139:13-14

"...For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well..."

Ezekiel 16:1-34

"The word of the Lord came to me: 'Son of man, confront Jerusalem with her detestable practices and say,...On the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to make you clean, nor were you rubbed with salt or wrapped in cloths. No one looked on you with pity or had compassion enough to do any of these things for you. Rather, you were thrown out into the open field, for on the day you were born you were despised. Then I passed and saw you kicking about in your blood, and as you lay there in your blood I

said to you, Live!...I bathed you...I clothed you...I put bracelets on your arms...So you were adorned with gold and silver; your clothes were of fine linen and costly fabric...Your food was fine flour, honey and olive oil. You became very beautiful and rose to be a queen...”

Ezekiel 37:1-14

“...‘Son of man, can these dry bones live?’...So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet - a vast army...‘...Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it,’ declares the Lord.”

Thank You, Lord, for Mother who showed me how to pray!

MEDITATION

1 Samuel 1:10-2:11

"In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord. And she made a vow, saying, 'O Lord Almighty, if You will only look upon Your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget Your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life...' As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard...Then Hannah prayed and said; 'My heart rejoices in the Lord...'"

2 Timothy 1:3-5

"...I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also..."

Womanhood and Manhood

Womanhood and manhood are precious gifts from God. When treasured and used faithfully, they reflect some of Jesus' perfect humanity and yet incomprehensible divinity in the Trinity.

MEDITATION

Genesis 1:26-28

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule...'"

Genesis 2:18-23

"...Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man...they will become one flesh...and they felt no shame."

Many teenagers and young adults only see their friends' material wealth and their apparent freedom to enjoy 'the good life'. But they do not see their spiritual and moral poverty. Consequently, many of the poorer ones yearn to be like their friends but feel bitter when their desires are not fulfilled. Hear then what our heavenly Father says, "My child, there's more to your life than 'the good life' a yuppie looks for. Don't envy him."

MEDITATION

Isaiah 43:1-7

"...Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze...Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth - everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made."

Jeremiah 1:4-8

"...'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart...'"

Long-sighted or Short-sighted?

Of we are too spiritually long-sighted, we may fall on the steps before us;

If we are too spiritually short-sighted, we may admire our surroundings so much that we may not realise that we could have lost our way or we may not move on with God at his command.

MEDITATION

Psalm 119:105

“Your word is a lamp to my feet (current events)
and a light for my path (future events).”

Roller-Coaster Purification

Waiting for a roller-coaster ride to end is like gritting one's teeth during labour pains, or like the endurance of a Christian experiencing the fires of purification. However, while the first experience is unnecessary, and the second by choice, the last is both necessary and not chosen by His children but chosen by God for His loved ones.

MEDITATION

John 1:12-13

"Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

Hebrews 12:5-7

"... 'My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when He rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those He loves, and He punishes everyone He accepts as a son.' Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons..."

The Greatest Blessing on Earth!

☉ Lord, after over 40 years, You grant me 6 hours a day for 5 days a week for 8 months to spend unhurried time alone with You!

This is the greatest blessing I've received in this life in You, my God! I weep with joy and thanksgiving in praise of Your faithfulness!

How can I give thanks enough for Your overflowing love upon love!

MEDITATION

Luke 10:38-39

"As Jesus and His disciples were on their way, He came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to Him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what He said."

2 Corinthians 3:18

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

God Speaks Through Songs

For several weeks, God seemed distant, silent, yet present. I could not fathom that. "How can I share Your intimacy with others, Lord, if I do not feel Your fellowship, even though I am aware, somehow, of Your presence?" Then I came across this song written by a friend...

ALONE

*Alone once again with You, my soul feels a tender love;
Tho' around me lurks all the troubles of the world,
I rest, safe in Your arms.*

*In You I can find my peace, in You I find such joy
That the tears I've ever shed*

And all the pain and hurts I've ever felt

Just seem to disappear when I reach for You

And You take my hand in Yours.

Your love just floods my soul, chasing the gloom away;

The darkness disappears

When Your light comes shining thru'.

Your living waters flow

Over the dryness that is within my heart and soul;

You revive me, Lord; You refresh me, Lord.

I can only say, "Thank You, Lord...I love You.

Lord, please help me love others for You."

Catherine L F Wong ©1992

As I played the piano, tears rolled down my cheeks uncontrollably...God was speaking to me once more...He was speaking to me as a fellow traveller towards heaven, identifying with my longing to be more real in this strife-torn world.

Love is still with us, for GOD IS LOVE; and where love is, meaning and purpose exist for us to live on with Him and for Him.

MEDITATION

1 John 2:10

"Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble."

1 John 3:16-20

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in His presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything."

1 John 4:12

"No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us."

The Ups And Downs

Life appears to be a series of ups and downs. Work and our inner moods also go up and down. Come to think of it, Father, You have made us with these rhythms in life to keep us sane. We need time to be with You and we need time to be with our families and friends. We need to work and we need to rest; we need to cry and we need to laugh. We need to buy and we need to sell. Actually, Solomon recorded this observation thousands of years ago.

Those who accept this rhythm appear healthier, more stable in temperament and more contented with their daily existence. But those who fight against this rhythm seem to fall sick and feel unhappy more often.

Father, if that's the way You've created us, we want to bask in Your creative wisdom as we synchronise with You instead of playing our lives out of tune with Your melody for us. O, what beautiful harmony there will be on earth as it is in heaven. What opportunities there will be to reflect and display Your glorious presence!

MEDITATION

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven..."

Sharing The Creator's Joy

Writing is an art. The writer does not write to impress but to express. As such, the process of writing does not begin with the hand; it starts in the soul of the writer. There seems to be an assimilation of ideas, reactions and responses to the inner and outer world of the artist. After much chewing, swallowing and digesting of thoughts, out come the words strung together to express the inexpressible of heart and mind.

In this activity, my Lord, I feel with You as You created the heavens and the earth. It must have been exhilarating, to say the least! There You were, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, putting into action what You discussed before the world began. No wonder that You, as our wisdom, rejoiced in the presence of Your Father and of mankind, enjoying the world that You made!

Father, how is it that I am not enjoying myself in the way Your Son did??? But...wait a minute...I think I am beginning to feel that joy with You...hold my hand, I pray.

MEDITATION

Proverbs 8:27-31

“Then I was the craftsman at His side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in His presence, rejoicing in His whole world and delighting in mankind.”

Psalm 45:1

“My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skilled writer.”

Father, watching the figure skating events of the 1992 XVIth Winter Olympiad on live telecast lifted my soul up in praise of You!

The skaters may or may not have known You. Does it really matter? You made them and You know them. Just watching them gracefully slide across the white slippery ice created an urge in my daughter and me to dance for You! I cannot explain exactly why; maybe it was the way You made us so that we would find our best way of communicating our adoration and devotion to You through movement and music. No wonder then, that an artist becomes depressed when he, for some reason, is unable to draw. People like that feel free as birds soaring into the sky when they let go of others' expectations of their behaviour and jump wholeheartedly into action for You!

Lord, how wonderful You are to grant us this freedom in You!

You alone will we worship! To You alone will we give our all!

MEDITATION

Psalm 30:11-12

“You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever.”

Psalm 149:1-5

“...Let them praise His name with dancing and make music to Him with tambourine and harp. For the Lord takes delight in His people; He crowns the humble with salvation. Let the saints rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds.”

God's Calculation Versus Ours

The world deems $1 - 1 = 0$
 God says $1 - 1 = \text{much}$
 John 12:24

The world deems $1 + 1 = 2$
 God says $1 + 1 = \text{endless supply}$
 John 15:5

The world deems $1 \div 2 = 1/2$
 God says $1 \div 2 = 0$
 Matthew 12:25

The world deems $2 \times 1 = 2$
 God says $2 \times 1 = \text{countless children of faith}$
 Genesis 13:14-17

MEDITATION

John 12:24

"I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."

John 15:5

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.”

Matthew 12:25

“...‘Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.’”

Genesis 13:14-17

“The Lord said to Abraham after Lot had departed from him, ‘...I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted...’”

Ostrich Believers

Humans naturally gather in communities where we feel safe in order to live relatively stress-free lives. Yet, when the Lord allowed external forces of persecution to disperse the first century believers, the faithfulness and the truth and grace of our Lord Jesus was shared widely with new neighbours, business contacts, government officials and others of various cultures and beliefs. How then do we balance this reality of being in the world and yet not being of the world? Needing close Christian fellowship and yet being salt and light in a dark sea of humanity?

When a local church seems to be increasing in numbers, many flock to it, hoping to have some of God's blessings rubbed off on them as they mingle with the 'right' group. It is not entirely wrong to do so. Some may have valid reasons for doing that. However, the more natural tendency, after a while, is to become ostrich believers. We tend to close our eyes to those unable to fit into the 'in' group. How sad it is when this happens, especially when the harvest is plenteous but the labourers are few...when there is much food but little salt to preserve it and

give it taste because the salt refuses to be taken out of the pot. Both society and the kingdom of God will be the poorer for this.

MEDITATION

Luke 10:29-39

“But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ In reply, Jesus said: ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers ... Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ ... ‘Go and do likewise.’”

When We Hit Rock Bottom

When we fall very low and sink and sink into the pit, the highest joy and relief is ours when we suddenly realise that at the very bottom is Jesus, the Rock of all ages, waiting to hold us up safely and renew us.

MEDITATION

Deuteronomy 32:3-4

"I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He."

Psalms 40:1-3

"...He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to my God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord."

Psalms 103:1-5

"Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name...who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Love Is Here To Bloom

When Jesus comes to our home, He makes us bloom!

Oh what hope, how different from previous gloom!

Master, try some kueh, drink some tea;

We will wait upon You and give our all to Thee because...

Love is here to bloom,
Driving away our fears of doom;
Our lives He tenderly grooms,
So we can see Him soon!

MEDITATION

Revelation 3:20

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me.”

Luke 7:47

“...Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven - for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.”

So Much And Yet So Little

Again and again, I feel the Lord's presence ever so closely in the midst of the unknown, the neglected and oppressed, the poor in spirit...much more than in the midst of those who own so much, and yet have so little to share with others.

MEDITATION

Matthew 5:1-12

"...Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven..."

Little children should be seen but not heard... Only in middle-age have I come to see how God used this distorted view to train me to sit and listen to Him from childhood. As I wondered why I was thus enabled to listen and understand Him and others, the Lord reminded me of this childhood blessing which I had taken for granted.

Until twelve years of age, I would sit on Mum's lap while watching the goings-on at home or listening to adult conversations silently. As they chatted, laughed or cried, each eye movement, each bodily gesture and each pitch and tone of voice was recorded in my mind and heart...till I came to feel at home with listening.

MEDITATION

Deuteronomy 6:20-21

"...In the future, when your son asks you, 'What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the Lord our God has commanded you?' Tell him:..."

Epilogue

What joy prevails when someone, having been estranged from the Father's tender loving care for a period of time, begins to hear God's whispers again and echoes the hymn writer's words...

WHISPERING HOPE

*When amid life's busy thronging,
Wearied and lonely you sigh;
When for your soul's deepest longing,
Naught to bring comfort is nigh;
Hark, on the listening ear falling,
Comes a word tender and true;
List to a gentle voice calling,
Bringing a message for you.*

*Whispering hope, Oh, how welcome thy voice,
Making my heart, in its sorrow rejoice.*

*All the world's glamouring pleasures,
Only deceive and enchain;
True and unperishing treasures,
There seek ye ever in vain;
Come lift your eyes to the mountains,
And your soul's yearning shall cease;
Drink at the life-giving fountains,
There to find rest and sweet peace.*

Alice Hawthorne

Suggested Reading

1. **What Return Can I Make?...Dimensions of the Christian Experience** by M.Scott Peck with Marilyn Von Walder, O.C.D. and Patricia Kay [Arrow Books 1990]
2. **The Gift of Feeling** by Paul Tournier [John Know Press 1981]
3. **Listening to God** by Joyce Hugget [Hodder and Stoughton 1986]
4. **Laughter, Joy, and Healing** by Donald E.Demaray [Baker Book House 1986]
5. **A Way of Seeing** by Edith Schaeffer [Fleming H.Revell Company 1977]

Learning how to be still so that God is free to reveal something of Himself to enrich and deepen us expresses the heart of this book of devotions. ***Listen to God's Whispers*** is a timely reminder that the pressures of a hectic and busy life need not draw us away from God. Instead, in the midst of busy routines, Dr Lee Bee Teik shares that God continually speaks words of encouragement, rest and healing to our souls. This book draws upon devotional readings and the shared experiences of the writer herself to help us stay tuned to God's "still, small voice" that brings us peace and assurance despite the hustle and bustle of modern life.

DR LEE BEE TEIK is the founding director of Reconre Ministries. She earlier laid down the practice of medicine to be with her children. In 1992, the Lord called her to the writing ministry and then to minister to His fulltime workers through pastoral counselling and quiet retreats. Her other areas of service include the training of lay pastoral counsellors and the faciliating of personal or small group quiet retreats and seminars. Dr Lee is married to Bishop (Dr.) Hwa Yung of the Methodist Church in Malaysia and they have three adult children.

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