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Assuring future for the girl child

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READINGS
2 Kings 5:1-5; Psalm. 8; Acts 12:11-17; Mark 5:21-24, 35-43

Verse for meditation: “He took her by the hand and said to her, “Talitha Koum!” (Which

means, “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”)”. (Mk.5:41).

The word of God explains that God through His son Jesus has empowered the weak and the rejected persons. God has revealed His indiscriminate love through Jesus. There is no discrimination as male or female (Gal 3:28). Through today’s meditation, an attitude to accept and respect the girl child need to be usefully developed in the society. Their talents would be useful to families and the society at large. But the girl children face many challenges and they continue even today. They are challenged from womb to tomb from the stage of a foetus in the womb of their mother till their death at the tomb. They are at the risks of foeticide, infanticide, women trafficking, rape, dowry, domestic violence and the like. The social scientist named Ram Ahuja has segregated them under three major headings.

1. Criminal violence
2. Domestic Violence
3. Social violence

Every year these crimes are increasing at an alarming rate. During the study on this subject in the past five years 1,64,765 cases of 2006 have gone up to 2,13,585 in 2010. Out of this 6870 cases were on rape. We have reached a stage where the girl child has lost her safety and security at their work places and at homes, where they work. The rapid growth of the mass media, the mobile phones, internet and the social media has become a challenge to the ethical and safe movement of girls and women. In this scenario, we have a spiritual and ethical responsibility to reflect and act on the basis of the Scripture.

1. The concern of God (2 King 5:1-5)

The Holy Bible speaks of a God who is concerned about and strengthen the weak and feeble ones. God does not show favoritism. He is the God of All, both man and woman (Gal.

3:28; Acts 10:34). God has named ‘Adam’ not for man alone, but include woman (Gen. 5:2). The body is different, but the soul comes from God. In the Old Testament, we find that God has empowered women like Deborah and Hannah and used them as prophetesses (Lk. 2:36; Jud.4). The Old Testament includes biblical books in the names of Ruth and Esther. During the earthly life of Jesus many women were with him to minister (Lk.8:1-3). St.Paul reminds the church at Rome about the incredible contributions given by women to the body of Christ (Rom. 16). Here, we find a list of women, who gave leadership in the church. Women are created in the image of God. And He cares for them. 2King.5.1-5 gives a reading on how God used a maidservant, a small girl for the supernatural healing of Naaman, the commander of the army of the king of Aaram.

2. The concern for the girl children should begin from families (Mk.5:21-24; 35-43)

Both the Gospels and the Acts record how the parents came to Jesus with the concern of their weak or sick as dying girls (Mk. 5:21-24; 35-43; Acts 9:36-43). At first we should confirm the safety of our girl children at our homes itself. Parents have a major role towards care of their girl children. Parents should scrutinize and have an eye on their education, friendships and the needs of girls. St. Paul tells us “… do not exasperate your children instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). In our Indian culture, after marriage the girl is sent to another family. But at their own homes they are always haunted even from childhood with the thought that they are strangers in their own homes and at some stage they will be sent to another house in which they are strangers there too. When they reach the new house of the in-laws, they are considered as outsiders and as “one who has come from outside”. Here girls need a ‘space’ for them. Such ‘space’ should start at their homes itself. She is also a legal heir for the love of God that has been expressed through Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus has held the hand of the hapless girl and asked others to give her food. He is holding the hands of girls with his love who are weak due to many reasons and give them new life even today (Num.27:1-11). Moreover, the Lord reminds us to make sure the safety of the girls giving us that responsibility.

3. Girls in the Ministry of the Kingdom of God (2 Kings 5:1-5, Acts 12:11-17)

As we have seen in the Old Testament and the New Testament, God uses girls in the ministry. As mentioned above, when the young servant girl at the house of Naaman, the commander of the Army of the king of Aram introduced the ‘Living’ God to them, not only

Naaman was healed, but also the difference between Aram and Israel have been healed. Peter was released from the jail by the angel of the Lord and he went to the house of Mary, the aunt of John Mark. They were all praying together. As Peter was knocking, a girl named Rhoda identified his voice and informed those praying about the arrival of Peter. Here the first step of faith had been set by a girl. But those who were praying did not believe her (Acts 12:12-15). But Rhoda could believe it and see the mighty act of God. The girl children have a great message in building up the church, society and the country through sharing the love of God. Let us encourage them to utilize their talents to the optimum level for building the Kingdom of God.

Prayer

Gracious God, who through Your Son made the weak and the rejected strong and whole, we praise you. Look mercifully on all the girl children who are rejected and marjinalized, and give them courage and new hope. Help us to receive the girl child as a full member of the community and restore all the honour and respect they deserve. May the talents and potentials you have endowed them with, flower fourth to become essential resources in the community. Help us Lord that we may together be liberated and equipped to use our mutual strengths and weaknesses, gifts and talents, opportunities and limitations, to contribute to the welfare of the whole world; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever more. Amen.