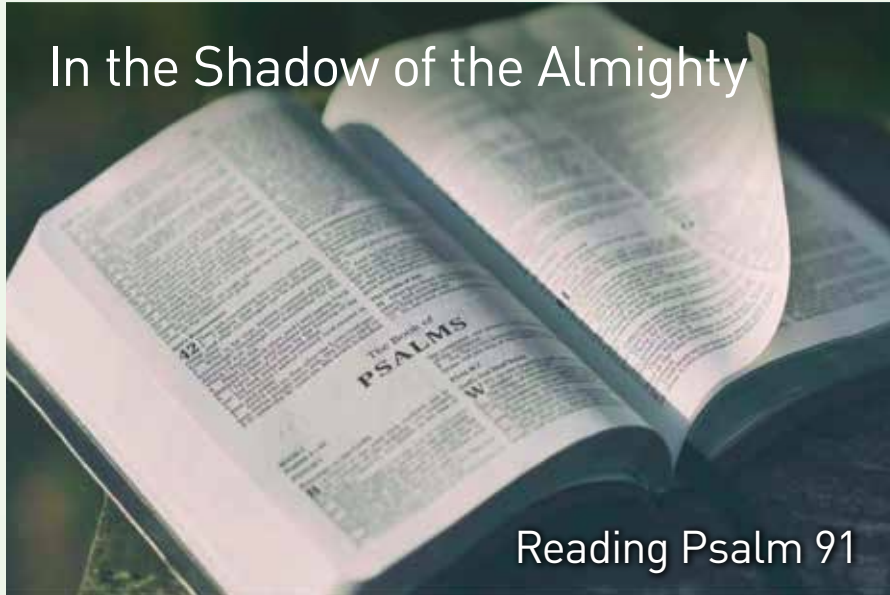


we believe in the inspiration of the entire bible and its inerrancy

In the Shadow of the Almighty



Reading Psalm 91

MS. ALLISON LEE // Associate Dean



Recently, a church member has asked a question, “How should Psalm 91 be read? Should it be interpreted literally and taken as an amulet for protection in dangerous situations?”

Interestingly enough, in Jesus’ temptation narrative, the devil quoted Psalm 91:11-12 in order to challenge Jesus’ divinity as the Son of God by throwing himself down from the highest point of the temple (Matt 4:6; Lk 4:10-11). In this instance, the devil was a biblical literalist and a believer of the Holy Scripture.

Who can provide the answer to this challenging question? In a seminary setting, seminarians will be using different methods of biblical interpretation; integrating both literal and historical context to determine the

meaning of the Psalm. In the process, they apply the principles of hermeneutics, analysis of unique Hebrew poetic structure and the understanding of idioms and figure of speech to the text of Psalm 91. Besides, they can refer to the best Psalms commentaries in the library to conclude what is the meaning and message of this Psalm. Technically, they provide the best answer to the question based on years of biblical research scholarship. But the church member did not ask for an academic answer, rather, he/she seeks for a pastoral answer. Is God indeed a protector as what the psalmist claims He is?

My response to the question is very much closely related to my spiritual journey as a newly convert from the Chinese folk religion. My first contact and reading of Psalm 91 happened in the context of spiritual warfare at a house where idols were worshipped.

When the Psalm was read aloud, the oppressive atmosphere of fear in the house changed to an aura of peace and tranquillity. What a surprise and a joy to discover that it had spiritual authority over the principalities and power of darkness behind the idols. It is the sword of the spirit which is part of the armour of God to withstand the evil one in spiritual warfare.

This first-hand unsought encounter has shaped my understanding of the nature of the bible as Rhema or utterance of God. The sixty-six books of the bible are not merely “text” to be exegeted, but as the Word of God which is full of the spirit and life. What God intends to accomplish through His written word shall not return to Him empty (Isaiah 55:10-11). Therefore, reading, interpreting and taking God’s protection literally is not outside the perimeter of legitimate hermeneutics. However, Jesus’ refusal to be tempted by the devil had pointed out the importance of taking God’s protection in context “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”

Since Psalm 91 is known for its image of God as the encircling shield of protection, it has inspired writers, music composers and artists to bring forth a message of trust in God’s unfailing protection and salvation. Not surprisingly, it is also known as the soldiers’ psalm during the world wars. Yet soldiers who recited the Psalm or wore it as amulet were killed in the battlefield. How do we account for the dichotomy between faith and the death of the soldiers? Who can fathom the ways of God? Neither biblical scholars nor pastors can provide a satisfactory answer because God alone has the answer.

The enigma of Psalm 91 will continue to intrigue its readers and exegetes alike. Its rich poetic devices will inspire artistic imagination for spreading the message of trust in the “Most High, the Almighty, the Lord and my God.” Thanks be unto God for His Word. ■

Launching of New Book “ETHICS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN” by DR SOOK GOO SHIN

In his recent monograph, Dr Shin seeks to challenge the dominant scholarly view of John’s ethics as an ineffective and unhelpful companion for moral formation.

In order to demonstrate the relevance of John’s ethics, Dr. Shin argues that the development of discipleship in John’s Gospel should be understood as moral progress, which was a well-known moral concept in the ancient Mediterranean world.

Having drawn an ethical model from the writings of Plutarch, this study aims to identify the undergirding ethical dynamic that shapes John’s moral structure by bringing out the implicit ethical elements that are embedded throughout John’s narratives, and thus suggests a way to read the whole Gospel ethically and appreciatively of its literary characteristics. ■



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The Gospel of our Lord Jesus is socially irrelevant, even if privately engaging?

REV. DR. TONY LIM // Vice Principal/Dean, English Department



The title for this article is taken from Os Guinness's underrated and under read book. Os Guinness years ago, wrote in his book *The Gravedigger File: Papers on the Subversion of the*

Modern Church that the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is *socially irrelevant, even if privately engaging*. It seemed that secular culture had subverted the church rather than the other way round!

Let me ask a provocative question: Do professionals (by that I mean teachers, lawyers, doctors, accountants, dentists, scientists, etc) feel the need to consult Jesus with regard to the *technical* aspect of their professional responsibilities?

You may say, "sure I need Jesus as my personal Saviour, but does Jesus really know more about dentistry (or law, accountancy, etc) than my university professor?"¹

As a professional you have real knowledge that impacts, influences and benefits the world. Do Christians and more importantly in our context, do seminary

professors have real knowledge that the world needs? A real knowledge without which the world is much poorer and in a more desperate and dangerous situation?

If we do not believe that we have real knowledge (as opposed to *faith based knowledge* that is *relative* and *true* only to Christians), then certainly what we teach in seminaries is *socially irrelevant, even if privately engaging*.

Some areas² in which Jesus has real knowledge and thus real answers:

First there is the question of which life is the good life. What is genuinely in my interest, and how may I enter true well-being?

The second question concerns who is truly a good person?

The third question asks how we can become a truly good person?

These are questions that we have been struggling with all these long years no matter what race, culture, and religion we come from.

Do you think that Jesus and Christians have the right answers to these questions? If so, our faith is not *socially irrelevant, even*

if privately engaging.

Thank you dear brothers and sisters in Christ, for your continual and ongoing support to the Seminary.

May the Lord bless you and bless the labour of your hands! ■

¹ I am not claiming that we do not need to go to university to study dentistry. But when I am stumped at some technical aspect of my work as a dentist, do I naturally and instinctively go to Jesus for help, because he is the best dentist in the world? In other words, does Jesus deal with *real knowledge in the real world*? Or only in faith-based relative truths?

² These are the Big Questions in life that we all need to struggle with. If we know who are the really good person and how to mentor/disciple people into good people, can you imagine what our company, government or country will look like?

From "Hard-ware" to "Soft-ware"

REV DR LEE MEE ONN // Principal



As I recall the various challenges since being installed as the fifth principal, I am amazed how the Lord has led me through the last four years of ministry. As our

Board of Directors reappointed me for another 4 year term, I can only look to the Lord for His continual guidance and provision. Apart from giving all glory to God, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your prayer, partnership, and support.

Praise the Lord for His provisions towards the financial needs of our Second Phase Project. Let's continue to trust Him for His divine intervention in the approval of the certificate of completion and compliance (CCC). It is our prayer that we are able to hold the dedication service in conjunction with the coming 41st Anniversary celebration on July 14, 2019 at 4 pm.

We thank God for sending dedicated faculty members in the past 41 years to participate in the ministry of equipping and transforming lives. Let's ask the Lord to continue raising more faculty members with clear vision and passion to join us in the effort to train more pastoral and lay leaders who are fit for the Master's use. Four of our existing faculty members are working very diligently to finish their doctoral programs. Efforts are made to identify potential candidates to be sent for further training as faculty in development. More guest lecturers are needed to provide supervision for our doctoral program dissertations. We are convinced that the Lord will also bring more dedicated students to be trained to serve Him more effectively and faithfully.

Recently we managed to invite a trainer from overseas to improve

our teamwork between administrative staff and faculty. We are reminded that all of our staff play a crucial role in helping the faculty members be able to concentrate even more in teaching and training our students. Their kind services will go a long way to encourage alumni and friends of MBS to be more involved and supportive. As the principal, I am also challenged to set a good example in order to motivate fellow co-workers to fulfill His high calling.

We praise the Lord for raising up about 1360 alumni to serve Him throughout the world in churches, organizations, and the market place. Let us uphold all of them in fervent prayer so that they will be faithful and fruitful in their respective ministries. Thank you very much for your constant prayer and financial support which means so much to each and every one of us in MBS. ■

Christian Mentoring: the missing element in the churches of Nepal

SANTOSH BASNET



Every human desires to have someone to walk alongside them in the time of struggle, uncertainty, and difficulty. They wish to have someone to show them the way, guide them;

help them to develop skills and techniques in their workplaces. Someone available and ready to listen when their relationships suddenly become treacherous and they are left alone to fend for themselves.

Every individual certainly seeks someone older and wiser to guide them when times are difficult and things go wrong even after using all the possible ways to make it work. Someone who can comfort them with the hope that life is still worth living even when tragedy strikes and their faith doesn't seem to provide an answer. At such times mentors can extend their helping hands to support the mentees.

The role of a mentor is, therefore, undoubtedly more challenging and demanding than just to guide a person to achieve something in their life. Simply because when it comes to Christian mentoring, the ultimate purpose of mentoring is to raise or build a person into Christ-likeness and to know Him.

Knowing this, I wonder how often the Christian mentoring takes place in the lives of Nepali leaders and believers today. How many spiritual leaders and pastors of Nepali churches have felt the needs

of mentoring and to be mentored? How many leaders think that we can develop our personal relationship with God through mentoring and overcome the challenges of our present situation?

In Nepal, there are many believers longing for Christian mentoring especially in the areas of a personal walk with God and personal integrity, unemployment and political unrest, family conflict, ancient religious practices, and pluralism.

All these issues have directly and indirectly affected the lives of Nepali Christians. They are compelled and are left alone to fend for themselves due to lack of proper Christian follow up, discipleship and mentoring. Many pastors and leaders in Nepal are spiritually burnt-out, thus merely maintaining the ministry but not able to disciple and address the needs of the believers today. Moreover, the government of Nepal has implemented the new general or civil code known as "Muluki Ain" from August and it will certainly affect Christians and their activities.

Are the Nepali churches ready to face the potential persecution? Are we mentoring our members that we should not fear persecution but we must face it with genuine faith and perseverance?

Strongly speaking, most of the Nepali churches are still on the verge of commencing mentoring and discipleship. Knowing this fact, NBBC has started a course on discipleship with students

taking their Diploma in Ministry in five different locations in Nepal. Effective August 2019, we have also started a course on discipleship that would address the needs of mentoring NBBC students. NBBC has also organized a one day seminar on discipleship for our students, staff, faculty, alumni, including pastors and leaders from Kathmandu and surrounding places. Intentional discipleship and mentoring is something that is really needed in our Nepali churches today. Most of the Bible colleges in Nepal are not offering these courses as a core subject.

I believe that the time has come for our churches and bible colleges to start a movement on discipleship and mentoring to face the challenges and persecutions.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Tony and MBS family for this opportunity to share about the needs of discipleship and mentoring in Nepal during my brief role serving as Acting Principal of NBBC.

Thank you for your prayers, support and encouragement. It is your faithful prayers and generosity that have sustained the ministry of NBBC.

I urge you to pray for our twelve newly graduated students for their future ministry in Nepal and beyond. NBBC look forward to your fervent prayers, supports, and encouragement as we train, disciple and, mentor our young men and women for the kingdom of God in Nepal and beyond. ■

Time Table for Semester 2, 2019

2019 Semester 2: Jun 17– OCT 25 | Mid Semester Break: August 12 – 25
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT 2ND SEMESTER, 2019 ON CAMPUS TIME-TABLE

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9.00 am – 12.00 pm		Marraige & Family	Old Testament Introduction II	Homiletics	1 & 2 Samuel
12.00 pm – 12.45 pm		Chapel	Care Group	Combined Chapel	Group Prayer
12.45 pm – 2.00 pm	LUNCH BREAK				
2.00 pm – 5.00 pm		Greek II			Preaching Clinic

EXTENSION AND MODULAR COURSES

MODULES	DATES	TIME	VENUE	LECTURER
Preventing Suicide	July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Aug 7, 14, 21, 28 Sept 4	7.00 pm – 10.00 pm	DUMC	Dr Joshua Eu Dr Luke Woon
Epistle To The Hebrews	July 11, 18, 25 Aug 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Sep 5, 12	7.00 pm – 10.00 pm	DUMC	Dr Shin
New Testament Intro II	July 1-5	9.00 am – 5.00 pm	DUMC	Dr Shin

EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

ANNUAL RETREAT-16 TO 18 JANUARY 2019 // THEME: INSIDE OUT Refreshing Spring Resort, Tanjong Malim



Speaker: Dr Sook Goo Shin and Principal, Rev Dr Lee Mee Onn as interpreter



Fun filled games and activities

COUNCIL & STAFF CHINESE NEW YEAR DINNER: 17 February 2019 at Nan Yang Restaurant, Sri Petaling (KL)



FROM LEFT Council member Lawrence Chen with his wife Lip Yee, Vice Principal, Rev Dr Tony Lim and Principal, Rev Dr Lee Mee Onn.



FROM LEFT Council Chairman Prof Dato' Tan Chong Tin with his wife, Datin Irene Yap, Vice Principal, Rev Dr Tony Lim and Principal Rev Dr Lee Mee Onn.

FAREWELL to Principal Emeritus Rev Dr Tan Kim Sai and his wife who will be leaving for USA on 4th April 2019



FROM LEFT Principal Emeritus Rev Dr Tan Kim Sai and his wife, Vice Principal, Rev Dr Tony Lim and Principal, Rev Dr Lee Mee Onn.

EXTENSION & MODULAR COURSES:
18-22 March 2019 at DUMC



Christian Apologetics Class by Dr Ng Kam Weng

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