

The Testimony of Chanti Raju, Good News Ministries - India

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Preacher: Chanti Raju

[0 : 00] In Godly ways like David. In the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river Kiba, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of King Jehoiakim's captivity, the word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzai, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Kiba.

And the hand of the Lord was there upon him. May God bless this scripture in our hearing. Thank you.

We praise God for this great. Time of fellowship and great support from you all.

When I was listening to the song, Amazing Grace, once upon a time I was rich.

[2 : 08] Thank you. But all my chains, all my chains are broken.

Thank you friends. I feel that my days are counted in this country on this particular visit.

We have enjoyed a lot and so much blessed with our time with you all. Our special thanks go to the leadership of the Church for opening the doors every time we come to this country.

Wonderful support in terms of prayers and practical giving. And also, my special thanks go to the Clayland Baptist Church.

We had a wonderful, blessed time last Sunday. They are very supportive to the work of Buddhist ministries back at home.

[3 : 33] Many friends here individually and as a corporate body, as a church members. We are very grateful to you all. And my special thanks go to the blessed couple, Bill and Grace, for organizing many things on this particular visit.

And taking up the drivings for the different places. And we have had wonderful time with other churches in and around this place.

On this visit, we had a great time of fellowship and hospitality. Again, with Bill and Grace.

And Gene and Ian. And Hamilton. And also David and Agnes. Andrew. Stephen and Ruth Palmer.

And my dear sister, Janice. Thank you very much. We had a wonderful, well-organized two lunches in Janice's house.

[4 : 46] Every time we are, wherever we go, we are received. And we are so much blessed for your wonderful hospitality. Special thanks go to the people here from the Church and around here.

Who give for the sponsorship of the people. Again, Bill and Grace. Margaret, John Care. And Elizabeth and John. Hugh McMillan.

He sends on a regular basis. Of course, this time David, Andrew, is prepared to sponsor one of the pastors in our fold. We have a wonderful time.

When I would stay in the Holiday Inn Express. Wonderful, wonderful stay. As sponsored by this church.

For 11 nights. 6 plus 5, 11. Yes. You know, the breakfast is always complimentary in such a hotel like that.

[5 : 48] Sausages. You know the rest. The text I read out is very relevant to my life.

From Ezekiel chapter 1, verses 1 to 3. You can find a man called Ezekiel, a prophet. But when he was taken as a captive by the enemy, he was just a priest.

An ordinary priest. In the temple. Of Solomon in Jerusalem. And we see the God's hand upon him.

And the way he received and he saw the vision from God at that time. The context for the text that I have read out can be found in the 24th chapter, 2 Kings.

How the enemy, the people of Nebuchadnezzar from Babylon attacked Jerusalem and besieged the entire place.

[7 : 17] When Jehoiachin was reigning. When Jehoiachin was reigning. When Jehoiachin was reigning. In the land of Judah at that time. He was taken into captivity. His wife. All wives and his mother Nehista, the princess.

All the mighty men in the land of Judah were taken as a captive. And the enemies and the enemies. By the enemy. And they were kept by the river Cuba. In the land of Babylon.

So as the text shows us that on the 30th day. Something is happening in the life of Ezekiel.

An ordinary man. That is being transformed into an extraordinary man. Like a prophet for his people. And after 5 years of captivity of Jehoiachin.

That goes to show that he has been there for 5 years. In the darkness. It presupposes the fact that when he was taken into captivity.

[8 : 24] He was 25 year old man. But he had been there for 5 years continuously. Then he began seeing the vision from God.

God's visitation. In a wonderful way. Expressly. The word used in the King James Version is expressly. I understand by Indian standards.

It is individually. I have a good news for you to share. That my English has improved after 4 years of my gap. When I was here in the church last time preaching.

I just expressed your place. As Bell's Hill. But I am able to say properly now. Bell's Hill. It is a great improvement.

So as I understand this word expressly. In the text that I have read out. Individually. There were many people in the captivity. Thousands upon thousands. 70 years of exile.

[9 : 25] But God was visiting one man expressly. That was Ezekiel receiving the vision from God. 30th year.

That shows the age of this man. 30th year. 4th month. It is not English calendar. It is Hebrew calendar. Thomas. But the year is very significant.

The number is very significant. In his life. And also in my life. The text is very realistic. And very relevant. To my story. I was sharing with men's fellowship.

Last week. In a restaurant. I didn't have any James Bond stories in my testimony. It is a humbling story. Very humbling story.

I cannot twist the stories to interest you. But what I am sharing now is for God's glory. And how he helped a rich.

[10 : 25] A wretched man into a blessed man. For his glory. And for the benefit of many, many people at my place. Under the banner of this good news ministries.

30 was the age of this man. When he saw a vision of God. God's visitation for his people.

A restoration of all the blessings. As the land underwent the troubles. Besieged by the enemy. And kept a long time in the dark places.

One man was risen up. And he just stood for people. And we could see the rest of his time. Doing God's ministry. He was 30.

And if you read the next chapters that followed. You could see how God used this man. Mighty man. Transforming him from a simple priest.

[11 : 28] In the temple. To the place of honor. Of being a prophet. Friends 30. Is the age of this man.

When he received the vision. I had the same vision. And the same age in my life. When I became 30 year old man. I was marrying.

This lady. Lily Sharon Rose. In a church like this. That was the time. When I was thinking very seriously. About God.

And his grace in my life. Though I was born in a Christian family. Though my father was a pastor. And I never committed myself.

To the Lord Jesus Christ. Until the day of my wedding. 11th January 1988. I could see.

[12 : 26] The vision. God's hand upon me. At that time. At that moment of time. When I look back. And my.

Situation in the past. So horrible. And. And so pathetic. Hunger. Extreme poverty. My father has.

Four sons. And two daughters. And I am. Number two. In my family. All the time. Being a. Pastor. Of a village church.

He struggled a lot. Even. He fought. For the bread. And is a struggle. For the bread. All the time. Daily bread. I could see. When I was a boy.

Of five years old. In my family. How. Difficult. It was. For my parents. To feed us. My father.

[13 : 22] My mom. Is no more. She. Went home. To be with Christ. Four years ago. But my father. Is still alive. He's 86. I could remember. My.

My mother. How she. Worked hard. Going to the field work. Under the scorching sun. To end. Daily wages. It's hard.

For a. Pastor's family. In the village. To. Support. The family. With a. Consisting of. Five to six children. My mother. Was a great supporter.

She was a great. She's a. She was a. Warrior of prayer. I learned. Many lessons. From my mother. The poverty. The poverty.

Was so extreme. That. Every time. Whenever we. Lacked food. In our family. My mother. Used to buy. The rotten. The rotten.

[14 : 17] Bananas. From the local market. The bananas. The people. Didn't like. To buy. The set aside. Leftovers.

My mother. Used to buy. Those bananas. To feed us. I was just. Six year old. Boy at the time. I could.

Remember. I'm still a. Reconnector. The extreme. Poverty. And she used to. Feed with the. Bananas. And eventually. Nothing was.

Left. For my mother. And she used to. Eat. The peels. Of the bananas. As I.

I was growing up. Had no time. No. Opportunity. To be in the home. So I was sent. To the orphanage. In a. Rajamundry. A place. Very close.

[15 : 16] To my native place. Five hundred. Children. Five hundred. Children. In that particular. Arthritis. Hunger. Used to be. The part. Of my life.

All the times. I began. Thinking. Radically. Again. It's the poverty. That I suffered. At home. And also. The.

Injustice. Being done. To my family. Under the caste. System. Christians. Are considered. Untouchables. And outcast. People. Belong to the.

Low. And Dalit. Families. Living. Far off. The village. I could see. This. Injustice. And indiscrimination.

From the hands. Of the so called. High caste. People. In my society. When I was. In the orphanage. Doing my grades. From sixth class.

[16 : 10] Until the tenth class. I just. I wanted to. Teach a lesson. To the society. That. Me. And my family. And. Who overcome. The extreme poverty.

So I was. Good at studies. And I didn't know. At that time. That God was. Preparing. For something. Special. In my life. I didn't know. That at that time. But I thought.

I was doing. Myself. I was able. To do. Myself. But I didn't know. God's plan. And his. Purpose. In my life. The greatest. Sin. That I had committed.

In my life. Was blasphemy. Finding fault. With God. For everything. That happened. In my life. Then I came out. From the orphanage.

And came down. Came. Joined my parents. Situation was worse. And I used to steal money. And food.

[17 : 05] And I used to beg money. For my studies. In the college. And the university.

Eventually I became a lawyer. A trained lawyer. I was so proud. To be a lawyer at that time. A trained lawyer. 30 years age.

Now I was prepared. To teach a lesson. Through my profession. As a lawyer. And overcome the poverty. Then God arranged the marriage.

In my life. That was the moment. When marriage was taking place. In a V church. In a small village. I was so serious.

About the past. And my ambitions. And my sinfulness. And my nakedness. How rich I was. Before God. I felt very naked.

[18 : 05] Before God. That was the moment. That was the time. That I was thinking. Of serious. Seriously. About my future. That was the moment.

When I received. Something special. In my life. At an invisible hand. Touching me. I was so sensitive. To the voice. To the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Speaking to me. My son. I am going to bless you. After the wedding. I shared my vision. And my things. And instead of the ambitions.

I was filled with a purpose. In my life. And God blessed me. From that moment onwards. As I shared my vision. With my wife Lily.

And as the family grew. And I had two sons. Keith and Hayley. And we have adopted a daughter.

- [19 : 02] My family is sharing the vision. That God gave to me. 33 years ago. And looking after the past. And supporting the pastors.
- And evangelists. And taking up the cause. Of the widows. Destitute widows. And children. Orphan children. You know the stories. Of what I am doing. For God's glory.
- So my ambition. To earn money. And to overcome the poverty. Gone and still. I received the vision. Is something supernatural. It's a life changing experience.
- Life changing. Life transforming experience. In my life. Then we set up this ministry. Called Good News Ministries. For 30 years.
- We had nothing. That's why whenever we come to this country. Then people like Bill. David. Janice. G. And Stephen.
- [20 : 08] And Ruth Palmer. When they treated us with nice food. I always used to keep some space. For desserts. I like your biscuits.
- And cakes. And cheese. And everything. You know the reason. I had never had biscuits. Or cakes. Fruits. Or anything. During my first 30 years of life.
- I thought it was rich people's desserts. And food. Chocolates. So whenever we are here. We are treated wonderfully. I enjoy your biscuits.
- That I missed. 30 years. The beginning of my 30 years of life. God is so gracious. The amazing grace song is so touching. And so.
- When I listen to that song. At my request. That was on the list. When I was rich. God lifted me up.
- [21 : 10] And blessed me. Because God blessed me. I want to pass on the same baton. Of the blessing. To the underprivileged. And the marginalized families. To my place.
- Through the good news ministries. God is so wonderful. Providing. And the provision. For the vision. That's the two words.
- I always express. I express. Provision. For the vision. Despite the challenge. During the pandemic. COVID-19 pandemic.
- We could see God's provision. In a wonderful way. At the end of this itinerary. In the United Kingdom. I am supposed to go. To the United States. The Houston. Texas.
- To attend. A Rotary. International Convention. The reason for my meeting. Or going there. Is to see how.
- [22 : 07] God is continuously. Helping us. My people. As a community. As a community. When I went to America. Atlanta. Three years ago.
- Before COVID-19 challenge. There was a big gathering. Rotary. Rotary. If you know. Rotary. You know. This is. It's a secular. But it's a service oriented organization.
- In Atlanta. There's a Rotary International Convention. It was taking place. Three years ago. I was there. There were about 40,000 people.
- Gathered in one big hall. And I was attending one of the meetings. The general meeting. General body meeting.
- I had a phone call from India. From my Eastern pastor at that time. Somebody died in our church. And the Eastern pastor.
- [23 : 09] He wanted to do the funeral for that. So he was asking for the relevant scriptures. From the Bible at that time. So I answered.
- I lifted. Even the meeting was going on. I lifted my. I answered my phone. Mobile phone. I gave him the relevant scriptures from the Bible.

For the sake of the funeral service. An American sitting next to me. After conversation finished. He asked me. Are you Christian?

Yes. He introduced himself. Saying that. He is also Christian. That simple conversation. Over the mobile phone.

That paved a great. Miraculous. Projects. Through Rotary. That gentleman. So impressed with me. And he invited me.

[24 : 07] To his place. And he is a member of the Rotary. Local Rotary Club. And that Rotary Club. Over the years. Of three years.

Had supported. Through my Rotary Club. In my city. The community projects. Construction of the toilets. Individual toilets.

You know. The open toileting. Is common. In the villages. That is the root cause. Of every disease. To the villagers. Because of the Rotary.

I was able to. I was able to. Get. The international. Rotary grant. In a sum of. U.S. dollars. 50,000. For construction.

Of 140 toilets. Most of the beneficiaries. Are our church members. And for that. They were happy.

[25 : 02] For that project. And they. Granted. Further funding. 100,000. U.S. dollars. For more than. 100. Heart surgeries. To the children.

Under. From the. Marginized families. Children. Who cannot afford. Have these surgeries. For their. Heart defects. So parents.

Were so happy. To see their. Gift of life. For the children. Through Rotary. So God. Helps me. Through Rotary. To reach out. To these people. As a community.

In respect of. Their religion. Or faith. That shows. The opportunity. That gives. An opportunity. For us. To show. The love of God.

And this healing. And this saving grace. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. So friends. My life is not. So. Like a.

[25 : 58] James Bond story. It's a humbling story. I'm just humbling. Before the Lord Jesus Christ. For the provision. For the vision. That God gave to me. Thank you very much.

Please. Keep on. Keep praying. For the vision. That God gave to me. Thank you. Once again. To each. And everyone here. Thank you. For your love. And support.

God bless you all. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.