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ILLUMINER

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BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT AND PENTECOSTALISM



With a century of existence, Pentecostalism is recognised as a “third force in Christianity” in addition to Catholicism and Protestantism. Currently, it is recognised as the fastest growing strand of Christianity, especially in the global south. Just as the emphasis on ‘justification by faith’ that emerged from Luther’s study of Romans catalysed the protestant movement, the emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit as experienced by the apostles on the day of Pentecost became the distinctive emphasis of the Pentecostal movement. Throughout history, due to the paucity of evidence and experience of the work of the Spirit as manifested in the early Church, very little attention

was given to the third person of the Trinity. However, with the arrival of the Pentecostal revival at the turn of the twentieth century, the teaching of the Spirit Baptism found a new emphasis and significance. The headlines of the first edition of one of the earliest Pentecostal newspapers, “The Apostolic Faith (AF)” reflects the new wave of teachings and experience at the dawn of the twentieth century. It said, “Pentecost Has Come: Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts.” (AF, Vol 1, No.1 Los Angeles, Sept 1906). Charles Parham, one of the movement’s early leaders, was convinced that Agnes Osman’s unique experience of speaking in tongues confirmed the revisiting of the early apostle’s experience of

the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The spark of revival in Azusa Street began to spread immediately to other parts of America, Europe and beyond. Despite his racial limitations, William J Seymore became instrumental in taking the movement to greater heights. He was convinced that Parham’s teaching on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, with the initial evidence of tongues, was soundly Biblical and added it to his well-established Wesleyan-Holiness theological system. A similar experience of the ‘Spirit baptism’ occurred about the same time in the Mukti Mission, led by Pandita Ramabai in India, completely independent of the movement in America.

The new experiences of speaking in tongues, healing, visions, and

prophecy in the movement led the early Pentecostals to believe that God was preparing the church for a worldwide mission. One of the numerous statements from the period says, “The gift of language is given with the Great Commission, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.’ The Lord has given languages to the unlearned, Greek, Latin, Hebrew and languages of Africa, Hindu [sic] and Bengali... the Holy Spirit speaks all the languages of the world through His children.” (AF 1.1 Los Angeles, September 1906, 1) In the following decades, those who associated with the movement taught that Baptism in the Spirit is an experience of the Holy Spirit subsequent to the regeneration.

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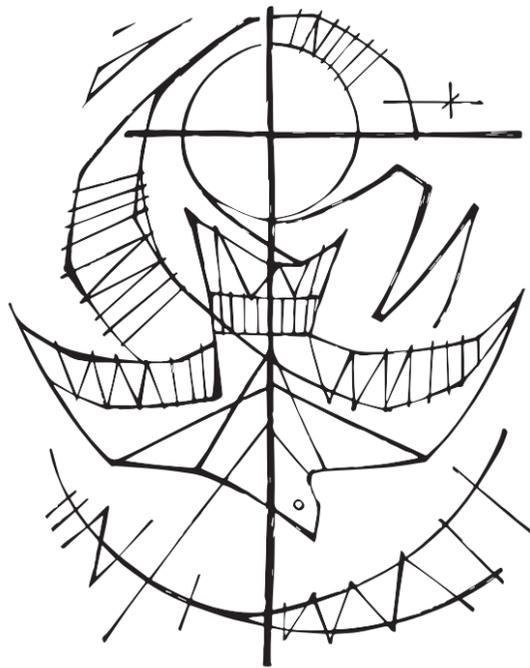
OCTOBER
Spirit-led life

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7 GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Wisdom
Understanding
knowledge
Fortitude
Counsel
Piety
Fear of the Lord



FROM THE editor

THE POWER FROM ON HIGH

The post-pandemic era is unfolding with new challenges across the world. Wars, persecution, economic crisis, and a myriad of other socio-political and religious issues have wrecked numerous lives. Hope for a better future is becoming a distant reality for many communities. A rising number of people are replacing religious beliefs, and millennials are becoming less interested in religion. In this chaotic atmosphere, one must anchor one's life to a genuine experience that rejuvenates and gives clear guidance to face the future.

Luke beautifully portrays how the risen Lord turns the disciples' despair into hope in the final chapter of the gospel. Celopas and his friend traveling to Emmaus expressed their anguish to their companion, unaware of who He was, that "Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet, mighty in words and deeds." He was their hoped-for-Messiah. They regained hope when they realized they were talking to the risen Lord. However, His mission was not merely the restoration of Israel but a universal one which he revealed in his conversation with his disciples. In the second instance, Luke portrays how Jesus' disciples, who were scared, confused and disoriented by the brutal execution of their master, were reassured and commissioned to continue what Jesus began to do. In both instances, Jesus clarified to them how the Scripture had been fulfilled through his life, death and resurrection. Having convinced them of the necessity of his death and resurrection, he instructed them to wait in Jerusalem until they were "clothed with power from on high."

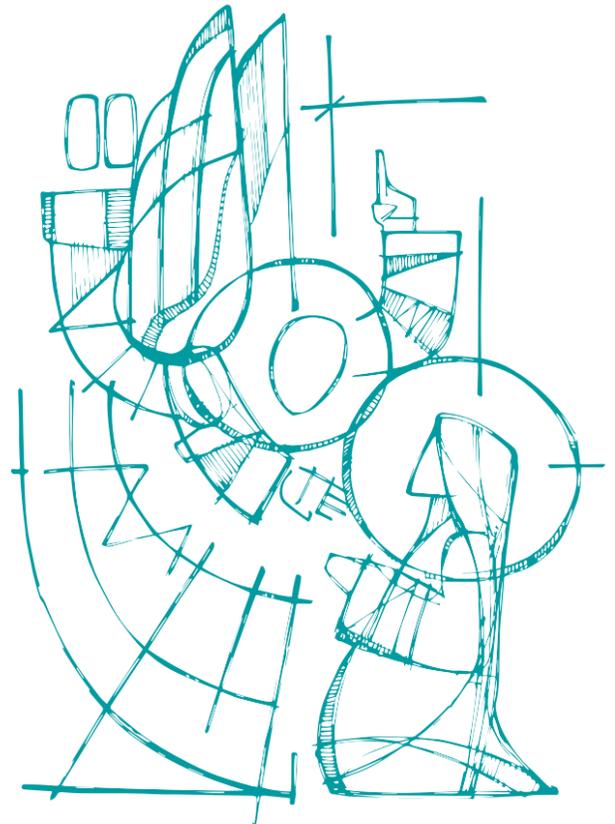
Jesus sending the Spirit on them, what the Father had promised, marked the beginning of the new era of the Spirit. Jesus' words in Acts 1:8, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witness.." is a programmatic statement

"Jesus sending the Spirit on them, what the Father had promised, marked the beginning of the new era of the Spirit. Jesus' words in Acts 1:8, 'you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witness..'"

unfolded in the rest of the book. Through the twine volume, Luke efficiently shows how the anointing of the Spirit is significant for mission by presenting how the Spirit led Jesus after his baptism in the first volume and the unction of disciples led to the establishment of the church in the book of Acts. Luke depicts the significant role the Spirit played in the expansion of the church after the day of Pentecost through various individuals who were "filled by the Spirit". For instance, in the first part of Acts he depicts Peter boldly faces the Sanhedrin, filled by the Spirit, and Stephen's fearless speech that culminated in his execution and in the second part Paul's mission to the 'ends of the word' initiated and guided by the Spirit.

The demoralized apostles sprang into action, boldly faced persecution, proclaimed the gospel and established churches reaching out to the farther ends of the world against all odds by the empowerment and guidance of the Spirit. The same Spirit is at work today in the church to continue the mission Jesus began. The church directed by the Spirit has the power to overcome any amount of challenges to fulfill the mission entrusted to it.

RIVERS OF LIVING WATER



“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water”
(John 7:37-38, NKJV).

During ‘the feast of the Tabernacle/booths,’ Israelites live in temporary shelters for a week commemorating the wilderness journey of their forefathers. It is the time of thanksgiving for God’s provision, protection, and guidance during their wandering in the desert. In ancient times, during the Feast, a special rite of water drawing was performed every day at the temple as a prayer and an expression of dependence upon God to pour out His promised blessing of rain on His people’s land. Each morning during the seven days of the Feast, at the time of sacrifice, a priest proceeded to the Pool of Siloam, accompanied by a solemn procession, drew water from the pool, and poured it upon the altar as a Water Libation (offering). There was rejoicing and happiness with people singing, dancing, and reciting Psalms & Isa.12:3. On one such final day of the Feast, Jesus chose to make the startling offer of ‘living water’ (John 7:37-39). He proposed that those who are really (spiritually) thirsty could come to Him because He gives living water (the Holy Spirit) to quench their thirst and rivers of living water will flow from within them. Jesus promised that if anyone believes in Him, He will give them the gift- The Holy Spirit- in abundance.

The word Ruach (“Spirit”) in Hebrew means wind, breath, or life force. Scripture conceives the Holy Spirit as God’s dynamic, experiential, and effective power. He is God whom you can experience;

He is God in action. In the Old Testament, a few chosen people were anointed with the Holy Spirit on particular occasions to perform specific tasks as agents of God. The prophets of Israel, who longed to see Israel’s restoration to God and the renewal of the Covenant, envisioned a future when the Spirit would be poured out ‘on all flesh’ (Joel 2:28-29; Isa. 44:3; Zec. 12:10). In the New Testament, John the Baptist presents Jesus as the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit (Mat. 3:11; Mar. 1:8; Luk.3:16; Joh.1:33). Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to be with his followers always (Joh.14:16) who would guide them into all truth (Joh.16:13).

On the Day of Pentecost, as Jesus had promised, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples. They began to speak in other tongues, praising God for His marvellous works. The Spirit empowered them to proclaim the gospel boldly, enabling the church to grow exponentially (Acts 2). The New Testament understanding of the Holy Spirit, mainly as recorded in the book of Acts, often held close association of the Spirit of God with the manifestations of God’s power, miracles, healings, prophetic utterances, inspirations, or visions by different people at different times and also, with the proclamation of God’s Word with extraordinary boldness and power.

The Holy Spirit is an inseparable part of the Christian life. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, God’s righteousness, and the impending judgment (John 16:8).

He persuades us that Jesus is Lord (1 Cor. 12:3) and makes us realize our helplessness and hopelessness without Him. When we accept Jesus as our Lord, the Spirit regenerates us (John 3:6-7) and makes us a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). For a committed believer who obeys God’s Word and the urgings of the Holy Spirit, He baptizes and fills him with His gifts, sanctifies him and assists him to grow and mature in Christ. He also empowers the believers to pronounce the good news of Jesus with confidence and conviction and fills his hearts with God’s love (Rom.5:5). In Jesus’s physical absence, Holy Spirit is our counsellor, comforter, and advocate (John 14:26). He ensures that we are God’s children and enables us to call God Abba, Father, with confidence and reverence (Rom. 8:16). He enlightens us and fills our hearts with the hope of our glorious inheritance (Eph. 1:18). God had identified us as His own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the guarantee for everything He promised (2 Cor. 1:22).

The Holy Spirit leads a Christian’s life. As God’s children, we need the Spirit’s help and guidance in every aspect of our life. Therefore, we must be continuously filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Jesus affirms that those who ask God, would receive the Holy Spirit in abundance (Luke 11:13). He promises that not only will they be filled with the Spirit, but rivers of living water (Holy Spirit) would flow from within them, making them a blessing to others.

“The Holy Spirit leads a Christian’s life. As God’s children, we need the Spirit’s help and guidance in every aspect of our life. Therefore, we must be continuously filled with the Spirit”



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Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia

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THE HOLY SPIRIT MAKES US TO BE WITNESS OF JESUS

There is an erroneous notion among the believers that the sign of anointing of the Holy Spirit on a person is that he can speak in tongues. Once such a person is able to speak in tongues, many think that everything that God has promised to him is fulfilled. But walking in the Spirit is the first and foremost thing the believers should know and above all, it is the Holy Spirit that guides every Christian's life. The Holy Spirit is the part of the Trinity that lives inside all believers. When one accepts Jesus Christ as his Savior, he receives the Holy Spirit. At this juncture, it can be said that both the acceptance of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit happens at the same time. In other words, it is the work of the Holy Spirit that makes us accept Jesus Christ as our Savior.

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! To be 'baptized into Christ' means that they were identified with Christ, having left their sinful lives, and fully embracing the new life in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). To be "in Christ" means we have accepted His sacrifice as the wages for our own sin.

After getting the status 'in Christ', the next step for a new life is to walk 'in the Spirit'. There is no excuse for anybody to walk in the old ways, talk like previously or act like previously, which really means we have changed radically. We should do everything as per the will of God. John 16:13 says, "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come." There is one more verse in the Bible which reiterates the aftereffect of receiving the Holy Spirit. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my

witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

As a matter of fact, those who have received Jesus and the Holy Spirit will lose their self-identity and they will get an identity that is purely spiritual. Once the children of God are filled with the Holy Spirit, they will be a blessing to others and on their part, there will be no any foolish act or talk furthermore. They will not find any means to surpass the teachings of Jesus Christ. Moreover, many think wrongly that once they are 'in Christ' they can have the freedom to do anything. Once we are in Christ and in the Spirit, our lives are entirely 'changed ones' but those who support the false truths say that once such people become the believers, the grace of God remains on them till they reach heaven. It is true that Grace of God never changes; but when we stray away from the love of God after accepting Jesus as Savior and the Holy Spirit as Guide, there is no guarantee that the Grace of God would be still with us.

Once we are in the Spirit, we become the witness of Jesus Christ. The way we act, speak, look, and even think should reflect Him and His ways. Once we are in the Spirit, we will never shy to talk to others about Jesus who proclaims the everlasting Word of Salvation and eternal life. We, the real Christians should at least keep and obey His principles and run away from sins. In this context, let us remember the golden verse which may guide us "Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night (Psalm 1:1-2)

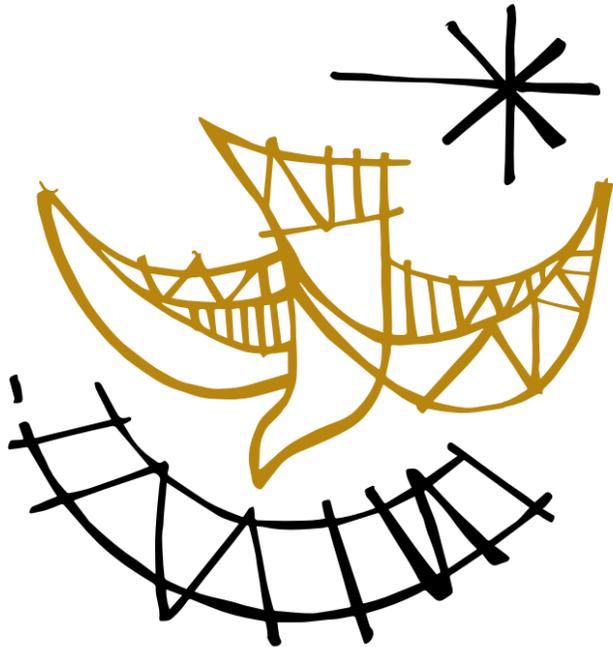


“ONCE WE ARE IN THE SPIRIT, WE BECOME THE WITNESS OF JESUS CHRIST. THE WAY WE ACT, SPEAK, LOOK, AND EVEN THINK SHOULD REFLECT HIM AND HIS WAYS. ONCE WE ARE IN THE SPIRIT, WE WILL NEVER SHY TO TALK TO OTHERS ABOUT JESUS WHO PROCLAIMS THE EVERLASTING WORD OF SALVATION AND ETERNAL LIFE.”



DR. BINU DANIEL
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THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit of the Lord hovered on the waters when the world was formless, empty, and dark. He was the formative cause of all life and order in the world. The great spiritual exploits and miracles noted in the Bible by men of faith were done with help of the Spirit of God. Our Lord Jesus, from his birth to his youth grew in the company of the Holy Spirit, growing in heavenly wisdom. The Holy Spirit strengthened Jesus during his trials, fulfilled his ministry in spreading the good news, and finished the assignment he came to earth for.

The Holy Spirit is the helper, comforter, and encourager (John 14:26) promised by our Heavenly Father. A promise fulfilled in the upper room manifested in tongues of fire and speaking in divine tongues. On the glorious day of Pentecost, the sweet Spirit was sent on earth freely for all the generations to come. After years of silence God ignited the revival of the Holy Spirit that birthed greatest gospel bearers and evangelists like William Seymour, Smith Wigglesworth. Just like the believers in book of Acts & in Azusa street revival, who were ridiculed for speaking in tongues and wailing, even today Pentecostal community faces backlash and mocking.

A discussion about the emphasis of the Holy Spirit anointing amongst youth in churches, a brother said, "If I eat a piece of cake and someone asks, "how does it taste like?," I tell him its sweet! but unless He tastes a morsel, the sense of sweetness remains unknown". The Holy Spirit's anointing and companionship

is much similar. One needs to experience him personally to know the Truth and freedom the Spirit gives (2 Corinthians 3:17).

Who is the Holy Spirit and what is the Holy Spirit anointing? After accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior by confessing our sins, getting baptised in water, the next major step as a Christian that stamps us for eternity is the Holy Spirit's anointing. Any person, regardless of age or gender can be filled by the Spirit if he asks the Father and invites the Holy Spirit into his/her life. How do you know you have been filled by the Holy Spirit? You start feeling like an uncontrolled power comes upon you, making you weep, sob, wail, utter words in unknown languages "as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). As you walk in the Holy Spirit Speaking in tongues, praying to God – New gifts are given, - gift of interpretation, gift of healing, gift of miracles, prophecy, the discernment of spirits, diverse kinds of tongues, all for edifying and equipping the Church (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

The Holy Spirit is the oil that keeps our faith burning in this dark and cold world. Why do we need the Holy Spirit? To withstand temptations that come like the clickbait notification, invitations to adultery and sin, the Holy Spirit is the loudest voice that pricks you about good and evil. The days coming will be like the days of Samson, when Delilah will lure you in, who will pinch your conscience to wake up and run like Joseph? The days coming are like Judas, plotting to betray you, one would need His wisdom and discernment to be

"After accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour by confessing our sins, getting baptised in water, the next major step as a Christian that stamps us for eternity is the Holy Spirit's anointing. Any person, regardless of age or gender can be filled by the Spirit if he asks the Father and invites the Holy Spirit into his/her life."

innocent like a dove and be wise like a serpent.

Our generation needs the anointing of the Holy Spirit like never before, to live a blameless and victorious life on this earth. Why are most churches in our community dry and Barren? Somewhere the power of the Holy Spirit has been reduced to an instrumental worship noise, leaders not heeding to Spirit's guidance. Often our fellowships are places where the Spirit of God is grieved the most. Elders lacking the warmth, youngsters reluctant to repent and be baptised, unaware of tarry meetings and prayers. The very Spirit that convicts the masses to repentance, moves hearts to savior's cross, anoints them in fire for the revival is not given a chance to take control. The once powerfully anointed believers are losing the warmth and love for Christ because leaders in the churches are barely functioning in the Spirit of Christ but of their own selfishness. A cold morsel of words is turning souls ice cold, whereas the false sermons on prosperity, money is selling like hot cakes. Oh, how we wish we had people like Kathryn Kuhlman, Kenneth E Hagen who were so drenched in the Holy spirit their presence would throw people on the ground in conviction of their sins.

The Holy Spirit guides the life of a Christian in his pilgrim journey

on this earth. In his absence or the inability to hear his voice leads to bigger pitfalls. Prodigals are born each day in our churches because we are searching for the love, joy, and peace in the world rather than the words and presence of God. The fruits we were called to bear, we will remain unfruitful in his garden, not fit for the calling on us to spread the Gospel (Galatians 5:22-23).

How can you receive this gift of the Holy Spirit? Peter says "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." - Acts 2:38. One's life may be void, empty and in darkness of sin but if they let the Spirit hover on the hopeless life, he can make it into a fruitful, flourishing, marvellous creation of God.



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LENS IN THE LIGHT

The Incredible Migration

Bar tailed godwits are birds which come to New Zealand every summer from their breeding ground in the Arctic. These birds move large distances to avoid frozen ground in the Arctic as the season changes. Each September godwits fly directly from Alaska to New Zealand without a break; then leaving NZ in February for the yellow sea and then back to Alaska. They leave from Alaska in the Northern Hemisphere to New Zealand in the Southern Hemisphere in just 9 days! Unlike seabirds they cannot rest on water or feed at sea! No rest, no turning back, only the great ocean below. Their 11,000 Kms journey is the longest nonstop flight undertaken by any bird and also the longest journey without pausing to feed, undertaken by any animal. This is because they have the ability to shrink their guts, replacing the weight with muscle and fat. Aided by strong tailwinds and with average speed of 56 Kms per hour they complete a 11,000 Kms journey through the mid pacific without sleeping, to reach New Zealand in 9 days. With a total round trip of 29,000 Kms, it is likely that a bird will fly more than 460,000 kms during the course of its lifespan. Godwits are relatively small bird. The bill to tail length is 35 to 40 cm with an average wingspan of 75 cm. Males are smaller than females. Males weigh 200 - 400 gms while females weigh 250-650 gms; this varies, depending on the time of year and geographic location. They feed primarily on insects, molluscs and other crustaceans. Long pointed wings and sleek design give godwits a lot of aerodynamic potential.

We can derive great spiritual lessons from these little migratory birds. As they flee the deadly, frozen grounds – we as Christians, must flee from the deadly sins - Psalm 1:1; Romans 6 : 12-23; 1 John 3:6-7; 1 Peter 2:21-22. Bar-tailed godwits fly tirelessly over the vast oceans with a purpose; likewise we as faithful servants, must serve God tirelessly - Romans 12:11; Colossians 3:23-24; Galatians 6:9. The godwits birds, have a goal, they can judge the time and season, they look forward to a place ahead of them in their mind and prepare and adapt themselves to reach their destination; We children of God should likewise judge times and seasons, have a goal, and are to prepare ourselves, always ready, pressing on to our final destination : Mark 13: 28-29; Romans 13:12; Matthew 24:44.

"THE GODWITS BIRDS, HAVE A GOAL, THEY CAN JUDGE THE TIME AND SEASON, THEY LOOK FORWARD TO A PLACE AHEAD OF THEM IN THEIR MIND AND PREPARE AND ADAPT THEMSELVES TO REACH THEIR DESTINATION; WE CHILDREN OF GOD SHOULD LIKEWISE JUDGE TIMES AND SEASONS, HAVE A GOAL, AND ARE TO PREPARE OURSELVES, ALWAYS READY, PRESSING ON TO OUR DESTINATION."



RENI GEORGE
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Reni is a Microbiologist, resides in Auckland New Zealand. He is an ardent nature lover and photographer. He is involved in youth and Sunday School ministry.



It's your breath in our lungs

See the source image We are God's masterpiece. Genesis 2: 8, And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. I am sure Adam and Eve must have enjoyed the fresh and clean air in the garden of Eden every day. Today, we live in a paradoxical environment with all the urbanization and industrialization impacting the health of human beings. One such disease condition is asthma. Asthma is a disease that can affect the airways in the lungs. In 2019, 262 million people were affected by asthma, causing 455,000 deaths (WHO, 2022). In asthma, the airways in the lungs get inflamed from exposure to environmental allergens, resulting in swelling and narrowing of the airways along with extra mucus production, making it hard to breathe (NIH, 2020).

CAUSES

1. Family History: close relatives such as parent or siblings
2. Allergic condition: People with asthma often have associated allergic conditions like eczema, hay fever, nasal polyps, food allergies, and hypersensitivity to certain medications, such as aspirin.
3. Urbanization: constant inhalation of toxic fumes released from vehicles or from industries in cities.

4. Environmental allergens (indoor and outdoor): exposure to allergens or irritants like chemicals, cigarette smoke, pollen, house dust mites, trees, mold, extreme weather.
5. Extreme emotional response or physical exercise.
6. Obese or overweight people are at high risk for asthma.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms include shortness of breath, cough, wheezing, and chest pain.

REDUCING THE DISEASE BURDEN

Good management of asthma symptoms can keep the disease under control and improve the quality of life.

1. Managing symptoms with medications
 - a. The two main types of inhalers for asthma are short-acting inhalers for quick relief and long-acting inhalers for everyday use for symptom control.
 - b. Steroids (to reduce inflammation): Typically used to treat acute symptoms. Taking long-acting control medications and avoiding triggers reduces the need for steroids.
 - c. Biologics: These are protein derivatives

that modulate the immune system and are used for uncontrolled asthma or asthma associated with allergic conditions.

- d. Immunotherapy: allergy shots
2. Avoiding potential triggers like environmental allergens
3. Reducing the risk of becoming sick
4. Taking prescribed medications and visiting your doctor on a regular basis



JEBI SAM
Texas, USA

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God: The Uncreated Creator

Man is naturally driven to contemplate evolution and creation. The advent of science and technology has by and large made us believe in human potential exclusively. In the last two centuries, science has developed in leaps and bounds. We seem to have all the answers today!

Consider an atom, the smallest entity of all known matter. These are nanoscopic and we have explored and are still studying about the atoms of the 118 known elements. It is intriguing to know that the atoms are so little, yet so complex! How the subatomic particles, the electrons, protons, neutrons, etc., are held in place. The amount of energy packed in these nano-sized particles, which man has started to harness, is enormous. But do we have creative power? With all this knowledge and scientific knowhow, can we create an atom? The answer today is no! We can possibly convert one element into another chemical element by the process of nuclear transmutation. This is done by changing the number of positively

charged protons or neutral charged neutrons in an atom to yield another, by a nuclear reaction.

In short, man cannot create matter out of nowhere, we are just using up the natural resources which existed from the BEGINNING to build upon! Like the Lego-blocks we are just building with the basic building blocks which were created in the BEGINNING by an OMNISCIENT GENIUS! Starting from quantum physics which deals with the study of smallest atoms and subatomic entities, to Astrophysics, which is the study of the largest planets and stars in space; cannot answer how things came into existence and resort to hypothesis and calculative assumptions, trying to scratch the surface or quantifying the tip of the iceberg. The question now remains who is the creator? The bible starts with the opening words to address this query in Genesis 1:1 – In the beginning GOD created... The creation of God itself testifies about HIS greatness and genius. It is written in Psalm 19:1 – “The heavens declare the glory of God;

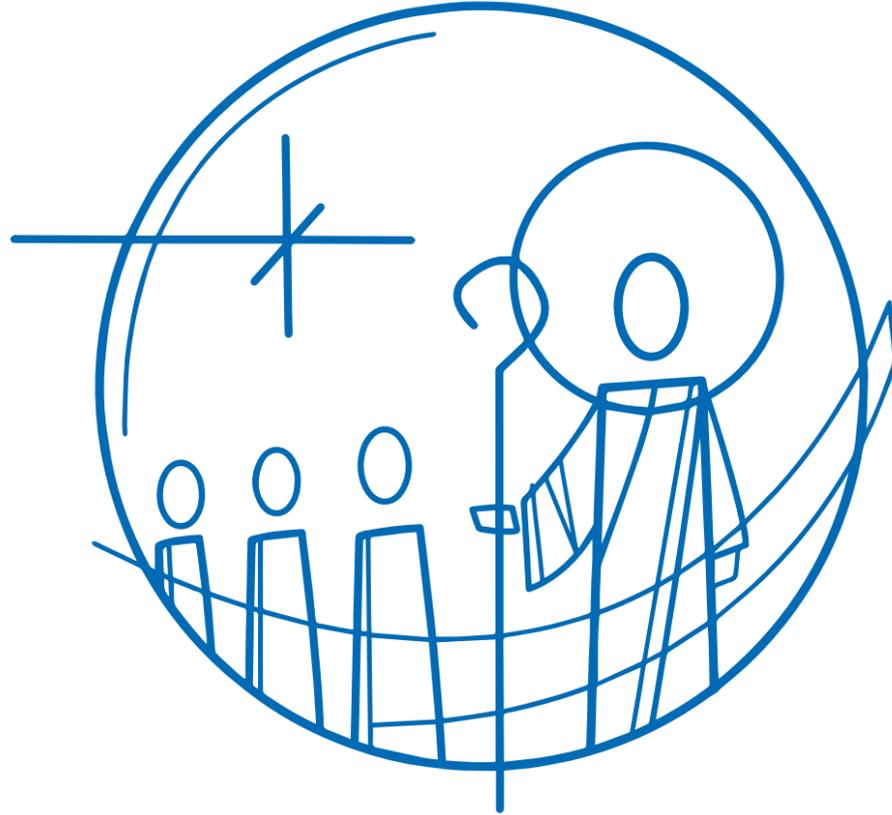
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.” Romans 4:17; says, The God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. We cannot even create an atom, nor can control the forces of nature which manifests the Creator’s power and dominion! Man can never comprehend the magnitude of God’s wisdom. Romans 11:33 – Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!Th



THOMAS KURIAN
Auckland, New Zealand

Thomas Kurian is a Chemistry Lecturer and a passionate teacher of both science and Bible

“Man cannot create matter out of nowhere, we are just using up the natural resources which existed from the BEGINNING to build upon! Like the Lego-blocks we are just building with the basic building blocks which were created in the BEGINNING by an OMNISCIENT GENIUS!”



Submission to the Process

During these months of summer, like everyone around us we too were waiting for the fruits of our labor from our very own backyard garden. My wife and I toiled hard after the winter, met our foe, the ground. Made sure, it was made ready and supplemented it with nutrients and water it needed. The results that followed, brought a smile on our faces and a sense of accomplishment.

As the days passed, we saw flowers, and its many colors, bees and birds, chirping, laughter and so much more. The anticipation of what would follow, which gave us hope. Our evening discussions saw us sitting by this garden, talking to each other or spending time there reading a book, till the season when fruits appeared within people's backyard.

If flowers brought joy, the first signs of fruits showing up in our garden, brought gladness into our hearts and Ps 4:7 came to mind, "You have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased". As our neighbors started receiving their first fruits, we were still a long way off and that set us thinking about what we could have done better. That pondering, brought us to the parable of the Sower and seed which did not fall into good ground. Our ground was still the issue, how we could have changed the situation we faced, as if we could have a raised garden bed. The seed was good, and so were the activities that followed, but the ground no matter how hard we tried, was not prepared enough to bring forth fruit in its season.

The garden went through its process, received its rain in due season and had expectations

placed on it, but since the ground did not give in to the process, no amount of work on it proved useful. The ground was not willing to submit to the process and the vision we as its owners had for it. Our Lives are no different. We go to church, appreciate the worship, and sing with all our heart and above all hear the word, but unwilling to let the word sink in, unwilling for the faith to take shape and truly live up to our fruitful name, the Children of God. We need to raise our garden bed of faith, in mind and thought, make sure we are ready and teachable. Allowing for the word to cleanse our hearts and be reconciled, prune us till we understand God's perfect will for A person taking a selfie



PR TIJO OOMMEN
Cleveland, USA

Toji currently works as a facilities manager with a multinational group, he is married to Neema Johnson, and they have a son, Erasmus Jacob Oommen, who is currently doing his 1st year University. Toji is also an ordained minister with the Church of God, Cleveland. He now attends a local church at Edmonton and serves the Lord in areas where the Lord leads them as a family.

“We need to raise our garden bed of faith, in mind and thought, make sure we are ready and teachable. Allowing for the word to cleanse our hearts and be reconciled, prune us till we understand God’s perfect will for us and become truly fruitful as He wants us to be.”

BURIAL GROUND FOR CO₂



Exciting news for environmentalists the world over is that engineers are building a burial ground for unwanted greenhouse gas on the shores of an island off Norway's North Sea coast. The future terminal will be pumping tonnes of liquified carbon dioxide captured from the top of factory chimneys across Europe into cavities deep below the seabed. It may be recalled that only last week Germany inaugurated a railway line powered entirely by hydrogen, a world premiere and major step forward for green train transport despite nagging supply challenges. Hydrogen trains have become a promising way to decarbonise the rail sector and replace climate warming diesel, which still powers in Germany. A fleet of 14 trains provided by French industrial giant, Alstom, to the German state Lower Saxony has replaced diesel locomotives on the 100 kilometres of track connecting cities near Hamburg.

Hydrogen is abundant on earth as an element and is almost found as part of another compound such as water or methane and it must be separated into pure hydrogen for use in fuel cell electric vehicles. Hydrogen fuel combines with oxygen from the air through a fuel cell creating electricity and water through an electrochemical process. Fuel cells provide advantages over

traditional combustion-based technologies including greater efficiencies and lower emissions. Since hydrogen fuel cells only emit, there are no carbon dioxide emissions or other pollutants released into the atmosphere. Fuel cells are also quiet during operation as they have fewer moving parts than combustion technologies.

It is pertinent to note that China emits more greenhouse gas than the entire developed world combined. The research Rhodium Group says China emitted 27% of the world's greenhouse gases in 2019. The US was the second-largest emitter at 11% while India was the third with 6.6% of emissions. Scientists warn that without an agreement between the US and China, it will be hard to avert dangerous climate change. The Asian giant has the world's largest population, so its emissions per person are still far behind the US, but the research said those emissions have increased too, tripling over the course of two decades. Thankfully, China has vowed to reach net-zero emissions by 2060 with a peak no later than 2030. It is hoped that G20 countries will continue their genuine efforts to reduce their emissions in the coming years.

It needs no reiteration that carbon dioxide causes most serious and long-term global impact. When released into the atmosphere,

carbon dioxide works like a blanket warming the earth above normal limits. Chemically, coal is mostly carbon, which, when burned, reacts with oxygen in the air to produce carbon dioxide, a heat-trapping gas. Coal is the single biggest contributor to anthropogenic climate change. The burning of coal is responsible for 46% of carbon dioxide emissions worldwide and accounts for 72% of total greenhouse gas emissions from the electricity sector. Coal was also the fastest-growing primary energy source in the world in the past decade between 2001 and 2010 and the world consumption of coal increased by 45%. During the same period, total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions were the highest in human history. Thus, considering the consequences of greenhouse gas emissions impacting the world in the immediate future, we need to put a brake on carbon utilities. And it is heartening to learn that a growing global movement is challenging the coal industry's expansion and promoting real solutions to electricity needs. Some governments, banks and grassroots activists have started a burgeoning movement to pressurize universities and institutional investors into divesting from coal. To avert catastrophic climate change, we must end our dependence on coal and invest in affordable and sustainable renewable energy.



TK NANDANAN
Freelance writer

TK Nandan, a freelance writer, is presently employed with an Indian Government Organization. Married to Jayasree, who is a nurse by profession, he lives in Kochi with their children. He is a regular contributor of articles to several English dailies in India.

FROM THE HISTORY

DEATH OF HOLY SPIRIT STUDENT, STEPHEN MERRITT

Dan Graves,

You may move the hands of a clock to suit you, but you do not change the time, so you hurry the unfolding of God's will, but you harm and do not help the work. You can open a rosebud, but you spoil the flower. Leave all to Him. Hands down. Thy will, not mine."

Stephen Merritt, who wrote those words, died on January 29, 1917. A wealthy New Yorker, he gave much time to overseas missions and to New York's poor. He had studied the work of the Holy Spirit. This led to the encounter for which he is most famous.

As a secretary to the Methodist missionary-bishop, William Taylor, Stephen met many missionaries. One was a young lady named Elizabeth MacNeil. Stephen could see that she was feeling overwhelmed as she left for Africa. He advised her to humble herself before the Lord and commit to Him. The Holy Spirit, he assured her,

would empower her to do the work for which she was sent abroad.

Lizzie taught a young African named Sammy Morris everything she knew about the Holy Spirit. Sammy hungered to learn more. When she said there was nothing else she could teach him, he asked, "Who taught you about the Holy Spirit?"

"Stephen Merritt," she replied. Sammy questioned her. Who was this, Stephen? Where did he live? Satisfied, he said goodbye. Without money or a map, he headed for America. Protected by God, who miraculously met his needs, Sammy arrived in New York. Stephen lived several miles from the dock. God arranged that the first person Sammy met was an alcoholic who had once been in one of Stephen's shelters.

The man led Sammy to the St. James Street Methodist Episcopal Church, where Stephen served as pastor. Stephen was heading off to

a prayer meeting and sent Sammy next door to a rescue mission he bankrolled. Stephen had gotten into trouble with the law because his prayer meetings had a way of running too late at night. However, on this night, he returned home at about 10:30. Remembering Sammy, he drove back to the mission. There he found seventeen men kneeling around the Africans, who had led them to Christ. That night, to the surprise of his wife, Dolly, Stephen took Sammy into his home and put him up in the bishop's room. Sammy was the first black man who ever ate at Stephen's table. Much of what we know about Sammy and his fervour for Christ was recorded by Stephen.

He told this story on himself. "I took him (Sammy) in a coach with a prancing team of horses, as I was going to Harlem to officiate at a funeral. I said: 'Samuel, I would like to show you something of our city and Central Park.'" Stephen showed Sammy the sights. Suddenly Sammy asked, 'Stephen Merritt, do you ever

pray in a coach?' Stephen assured him he did.

Sammy placed his great, black hand on the white man's "...and, turning me around on my knees, said: 'We will pray,' and for the first time I knelt in a coach to pray. He told the Holy Spirit he had come from Africa to talk to me about Him, and I talked about everything else, and wanted to show him the church, and the city, and the people, when he was so desirous of hearing and knowing about Him; and he asked Him if He would not take out of my heart things, and so fill me with Himself, that I would never speak or write or preach or talk, only of Him. There were three of us in that coach that day. Never have I known such a day. We were filled with the Holy Spirit, and He made him the channel by which I became instructed and ended as never before."

Continued from Page 01

BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT AND PENTECOSTALISM

A few select verses from the book of Acts (1:5; 2:1-21; 10:46-48; 11:17; 19:2-5) were widely used to substantiate this position. Similarly, Luke's emphasis on "receiving the Spirit" (Acts 2:38 8:15; 8:19; 19:2); "coming of the Spirit" (Acts 8:16) filled by the Spirit (Lk 1:15, 41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9; 13:52) were perceived as the evidence of this subsequent experience.

Traditional Christian denominations reject this idea that classifies Christians into two categories: "the Spirit-filled (baptized) Christians" and others. However, along with the spiritual experience that kept the movement alive, an academic re-examination of the movement's biblical foundation helped clarify its position. J G Dunn's seminal work (1970) was an initial scholarly response to the Pentecostals' use

of the key passages (mentioned above) about Spirit-baptism. He argued that the Pentecostals' use of these passages does not indicate a second experience; instead, it is part of the initial conversion experience. Additionally, the Spirit descending on Jesus at his baptism and the experience on the Day of Pentecost are not a paradigm to be followed as they marked the initiation of new epochs. Furthermore, Pentecostals' lack of reference to the Pauline epistles that portray the work of the Spirit as a continuing experience since regeneration did not corroborate their emphasis on the Spirit baptism as mentioned in the book of Acts. Nevertheless, the challenge posed by Dunn led to a series of scholarly responses supporting the Pentecostal understanding of Spirit baptism (Stronstad, 1984; Ervin, 1984; Shelton, 1991; Menzies,

1994) that successfully defended the experience of Spirit baptism based on the biblical truths. A recent study of the movement by Friesen points out that the early emphasis on speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit is changing among many Pentecostals (Norming, 2013). However, millions of Pentecostals worldwide still affirm empowerment by the Holy Spirit as a distinct personal experience in addition to regeneration work of the Spirit.

Along with the rapid growth, diversity and freedom held in the movement have hampered its fundamental characteristics that defined the movement in its early stage. The emphasis on missions, the exercise of Spiritual gifts, and sanctified life are less significant in many denominations and groups that identify as Pentecostals today.

However, their emphasis on the experiential aspect of Christianity over the sacramental and liturgical tradition continues to influence Christendom.



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A STATE OF EMERGENCY HAS BEEN DECLARED IN NY OVER POLIO

The governor of New York has declared a state of emergency over polio as evidence emerges that the virus is spreading across the state. Health officials say wastewater samples in New York City and four adjacent counties have tested positive for a poliovirus that can cause paralysis. Although only one case has so far been confirmed, it was the first in the country in nearly a decade. Polio was largely eradicated from the US by vaccinations that began in 1955. By 1979, the US was declared polio-free. But according to New York officials, vaccination rates are too low in parts of the state. Friday's emergency declaration is aimed at boosting flagging immunisation rates. There is no cure for polio, but it can be prevented by the vaccine. Mostly affecting children, the virus typically causes muscle weakness and paralysis, and in the most serious cases permanent disability and death.

New York's state health department said it aims to boost vaccination rates from the current state-wide average of about 79% to above 90%.

Chinese nationals plotted to create autonomous state within the Marshall Islands

A Chinese couple plotted to set up a mini-state on the Marshall Islands in the Pacific, bribing MPs and officials along the way, US prosecutors say. The man and woman tried to persuade lawmakers to set up a "Semi-Autonomous Region" (SAR) on a remote atoll. Such a zone would have expanded foreign access to the Pacific nation, which was administered by the US until 1979. The Marshall Islands government is yet to fully address the accusations, despite calls from opposition parties. But US authorities say the defendants - Cary Yan and Gina Zhou - undermined the island nation's sovereignty. Their efforts saw bills supporting the SAR's creation debated in the Marshall Islands' parliament in 2018 and 2020, US prosecutors say. Prosecutors allege several Marshall Island lawmakers, unidentified in the charge sheet, voted for the bills after receiving bribes ranging from US\$7,000 to \$22,000 (£6,100 to £19,000).

The pair were detained in Thailand in 2020 and extradited to the US last week.

World News

Italian nun murdered by IS in Mozambique

An Italian nun has been killed during a suspected jihadist attack in northern Mozambique in which a church, a hospital and two schools were destroyed. The Comboni Missionaries said Maria De Coppi, 84, who had been in the country for nearly 60 years, was shot in the head during the attack in the city of Chipene in Nampula province. A jihadist conflict began in 2017 and has recently spread from the oil-rich Cabo Delgado province to Nampula. The Comboni sisters said two other nuns, one Italian and one Spanish, had escaped to hide in the forest with a group of young girls.

Heavy rains expected in Kerala in coming days

India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted heavy rains in Kerala. In its circular issued on Thursday, IMD said that a low-pressure area has been formed due to the cyclonic circulation over parts of Bay of Bengal. This is likely to cause heavy rain in parts of the northern districts of the state. IMD said the pressure is expected to strengthen in the coming days. Heavy rainfall is expected in isolated places such as Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasargod the weather department said. Orange alert for heavy rainfall has been issued in Northern and Central districts. As rainfall has been continuing in the hill range areas for the past few days an alert has been issued in view of possible landslides. Fishermen have been advised not to venture out to the sea for now.

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QUEEN ELIZABETH II HAS DIED



Queen Elizabeth the longest serving monarch has died on 8th Sept. She was 96 years old. The queen reigned over a period of tremendous social and historical change since she came to the throne in 1952. On 6th Sept, two days prior to her death she performed her final duty of appointing Liz Truss, the fifteenth Prime Minister during her reign. Liz Truss said “the monarch was the rock on which modern Britain was built, who had provided us with the stability and strength that we needed”. In reference to the new King, she said: “We offer him our loyalty and devotion, just as his mother devoted so much, to so many, for so long. “And with the passing of the second Elizabethan age, we usher in a new era in the magnificent history of our great country, exactly as Her Majesty would have wished, by saying the words ‘God save the King.’” World leaders and dignitaries have been paying tribute to Queen Elizabeth II, who has died at the age of 96. They have honoured her deep sense of duty and her resilience, as well as the Queen’s sense of humour and kindness.

King Charles, aged 73, becomes head of state in 14 Commonwealth realms. He and his wife, Camilla, are at Balmoral alongside his siblings, Princess Anne, and Princes Andrew and Edward. The Royal Family has now entered a period of mourning. In the coming days, much of national life will be put on hold. Official engagements will be cancelled and union flags will be flown at half-mast on royal residences, government buildings, across the Armed Forces and on UK posts overseas. Members of Parliament will pay tribute to the Queen and take an oath to King Charles. There will be church bells tolling and gun salutes as local and national organisations and charities organise ways to pay their respects, with commemorative events and books of condolence. A state funeral for the Queen is expected in the coming weeks.



Tech News – Apple ditching the physical SIM card

A SIM card is a unique identifier in every cell phone that enables the device to connect to wireless networks in order to text and make calls. An eSIM refers to an “embedded” SIM, or a card that is hardwired into the phone itself. People tend to change their SIM cards when they are switching carrier plans or traveling internationally and seeking to use a different service provider during their trip. At its closely-watched Apple press event, Apple revealed that it is ditching the physical SIM cards and trays on its new iPhone 14 lineup in the United States. In its place, the company is embracing a digital alternative known as eSIMs. Apple first rolled out eSIM support on iPhones in 2018, with the promise of making it easier for customers to activate their cellular plans and to use multiple phone numbers and carriers for the same device. Now, Apple is doubling down on this feature by entirely doing away with the infrastructure to support physical SIM cards on the iPhone 14. “With eSIM you can quickly transfer an existing cellular plan or get a new cellular plan, all digitally,” Kaiann Drance, Apple’s VP of iPhone marketing, said at the event Wednesday. Drance also touted how eSIM cards can make devices “more secure,” noting that “someone can’t remove the physical SIM card if your iPhone is lost or stolen.” While ditching the SIM card slot may not be as polarizing as Apple’s decision to ditch the headphone jack, it has already caused some grumblings on social media. Frequent international travelers, in particular, are used to switching out physical SIM cards in different places and may travel to places where carriers don’t yet support the use of eSIMs. In mainland China, for example, eSIM functionality on the iPhone 14 is currently not offered.

World News



Jagdeep Dhankar has been appointed as Vice President of India

Jagdeep Dhankar has been elected as the 14th Vice President of India defeating Margaret Alva. Dhankar, a former West Bengal governor received 528 of the votes while Ms Alva received 182 of the votes. The odds were stacked in favour of Mr Dhankar as the ruling party BJP hold absolute majority in Lok Sabha and has 91 members in the Rajya Sabha. Mr Dhankar replaced M Venkaiah Naidu. The president of India is Ms Droupadi Murmu.

Pakistan floods: Biggest lake levels subside

Water levels in Pakistan’s biggest lake are starting to recede, officials say, after last-ditch attempts to prevent it from bursting its banks. Manchar Lake, in Sindh province, is dangerously full after record monsoons that inundated swathes of Pakistan. Its banks were deliberately breached to protect surrounding areas and more than 100,000 people have been displaced. Teams are racing to rescue thousands still stranded in Pakistan’s worst climate-induced disaster in years. “We see the water is now starting to come down,” provincial minister Jam Khan Shoro told the BBC. “If we didn’t make the breaches, several towns with big populations would have been destroyed and many more people in danger.” Floods in Pakistan have affected some 33 million people and caused at least 1,343 deaths, Pakistan’s National Disaster Management Agency said.