

# BIBLE STUDIES

**Healing Ministry Week**  
12 - 19 February 2017

**Healing Ministry Sunday**  
12 February 2017

**CMAI Day of Prayer**  
15 February 2017

**Theme**

***“Partnering together in the  
Healing Ministry of the Church”***

**Please write to:**

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**To all respected Bishops, Pastors, CEO's of Institutions and all members of CMAI,**

Dear Partner's in the Lords Healing Ministry,

Greetings to you all in the name Jesus Christ the name that stands for every healing we experience!

God has been gracious to give yet another year and an opportunity to celebrate the Healing Ministry week and Sunday 2017 with you all. In the envelope you will find a booklet containing bible study for six days of the week and an Order of Service for the Healing Ministry Sunday that is 12 of February, 2017. In the same envelope (except individual member of CMAI) you will also find the poster. Please display it prominently in the notice board so that people can see it, and become aware of the week to celebrate God's healing for us.

The theme for the Healing Ministry Week 2017 is **“Partnering together in the Healing Ministry of the Church”**. This year's theme is very central to our life, as it focuses on the church and our partnership in the healing ministry.

It is our prayer that this week creates some interest in our local congregations to set apart their time and join hands to make healing known to people of our country. Thus acknowledging God as the source of every healing and thank Him for the healing mercies. It is important to realise where we are and where we need to go as His representatives.

Healing Ministry Week will be celebrated from 12 – 19 February 2017. 15 February is a special day of prayer for CMAI to thank God for the healing ministry and to continue this ministry more effectively. 12 February will be the Healing Ministry Sunday. 19 February is an additional Sunday to celebrate if you missed 12 February Healing Ministry Sunday.

Last year many institutions, congregations, organisations and individuals earmarked the Healing Ministry Sunday offerings and sent to us. I take this opportunity to thank each of you for this partnership.

The Christian Medical Association of India is celebrating the Healing Ministry Week along with the National Council of Churches in India, Catholic Health Association of India and the commission for Health care Apostolate of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India. The broader partnership has enabled many more congregations to celebrate healing ministry.

We would like to place on record our appreciation for all those who were instrumental in writing these Bible studies and our grateful thanks to Rev Paul Pragasam, Dr. Nitin Joseph, Fr. George Varughese, Rev. Dr. T. Aruldas.

We are keen to help, assist and know how you celebrated the Healing Ministry Week and Sunday in your congregations, institutions and health centres.

We would appreciate your suggestions for strengthening this partnership, so that we can continue to have meaningful celebrations in the future.

I close with all good wishes and prayers for meaningful celebrations.

Yours in Him,

**Rev. Sharath C. David**  
**Secretary – Chaplains Section, CMAI**

## GOD THE HEALER

*"For I am the Lord that healeth thee"*

*(Exodus 15: 26)*

This verse which is a part of a passage portrays the story of the Israelites who after a triumphal victory against the Pharaoh and his army found themselves in the wilderness of Shur without water to drink. Their natural reaction was to murmur against Moses who in turn cried to the Lord and the Lord intervened and resolved the crisis by turning the bitter water of Marah into potable (sweet) water. This event discloses the true nature and identity of God.

The God of Israel is not a warring God who gives victory to the Israelites but also One who heals and protects them from all diseases and calamities. Although the Egyptians were punished for what they did to the Israelites, God warns the Israelites that in spite of their self-understanding as God's chosen people, God can equally punish them if they fail in their relationship with God. Human made and/or natural tragedies, calamities, and diseases separate us from the true purposes of God. However, God as the Healer liberates, redeems, and restores the humans and the whole creation to God's true intention. God punishes and heals.

The passage also gives some insights into the dynamics and instruments of healing. If your relationship with God is broken, it affects all aspects of your life. God through Moses used a tree (which probably has medicinal value) to sweeten the bitter water of Marah. Healing, thus, involves a right relationship with nature and created order. Moreover, by using natural resources (tree) to heal, God demonstrates that God's ways of healing surpass human ways, reasoning, and abilities.

This is a powerful message to the world today which pollutes nature by its unbridled consumerism and extravagance. Right relationship with God and with the created order is interrelated and both affirm that God is the ultimate source of healing.

### **Food for thought/Points for further reflection:**

1. What is the lifestyle that the Christians/the churches should promote to experience healing from God?
2. If God alone is the Healer, how do we understand the inordinate claims made by many health institutions, health professionals, faith communities, and their leaders about healing?
3. If God is the ultimate Healer, how do we understand suffering today?

**Prayer:** Healing God, enable me to acknowledge you as the source of all healing. Let me be an instrument in your hands. May we help others to join in your ministry of healing, through your Son and our Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

## COMMISSIONED TO HEAL

*"You received without payment; give without payment."*

*Matthew 10:5-8*

God's loving care and concern for the suffering people is seen in every single move Jesus made. Jesus in his prayer says that He received those (the twelve) who were chosen by the Father. He trained His disciples with the (John 17:6) plan of reaching out to the sick and the suffering which is accomplished through His disciples. God heals, God uses His disciples as His healing hands. Jesus commissioned His disciples to go heal, educate, serve and to make disciples. Multiplication of the disciples, improves the healing mission and helps the suffering humanity.

Everyone who believes in the Lordship of Jesus cannot disobey but obey His commission to care for the sick and suffering. We are called to provide selfless care for the sick and suffering and share the burden of Jesus. The words of Jesus in verse 7 and 8, "As you go... proclaim... cure... raise... cleanse... cast out". It resonates the heart of God highlighting his expectation to partner with His disciples in healing the wounded world. God expects our commitment for partnership in healing mission is associated with a graceful obligation. "You received without payment; give without payment." We have received countless number of blessings from the loving hands of God. How are we to reciprocate God's love that lavished bounteous goodness upon us? Jesus' invitation to accept His calling and obeying His command to "go" is the greatest among all privileges. Blessed are we the members of the church because the heart of God is flowing us to make us whole by serving Him and by doing His will.

God's commissioning us to become stakeholders in healing mission, reveals His generous heart to count us faithful and to entrust such a noble task. Even though we are found unworthy, God in all His love for us has not only saved us from bondage of evil and sin but also perfected us to be His partners in His mission through His generosity.

Proclaim the good news of nearness of the kingdom. "The Kingdom of heaven has come near". Proclamation is more than saying. It means "showing ourselves", "a living witness". When Jesus sent out His disciples on a mission, even though they went as they were but the difference was made by the nearness and dynamism of the Almighty with them. The Good news challenged and changed not merely the conditions of individual life but also caused a social change. The call is to revive communities from reflecting oppressive nature and marginalizing human kingdom values to liberating and empowering kingdom of God.

The commission is a combination of decision, direction, dedication and dynamism. Jesus sent out the disciples with authority to set people free.

### **Food for thought/Points for further reflection:**

1. How can we give freely, the healing that comes from God?
2. How can we demonstrate through our life that 'proclamation is more than saying'?

**Prayer:** Thank you for enlightening me to join with the hands of the Almighty in His mission. Lord, here am I. Have your way in using me in the ministry of healing. In Jesus name, Amen.

## THE CRY FOR HEALING

*“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”*

*Mark.10:46-52*

The healing of the blind man in Jericho is recorded by all the synoptic gospels, but Mark tells us that his name was Bartimaeus the son of Timaeus. 'The cry of the dying nerves' is severe pain as a result of ischemia of the nerves in neuropathy and peripheral vascular disease and here was Bartimaeus similarly crying out loudly in desperation, imploring to Jesus for healing. By addressing Jesus as "Son of David", he not only established Jesus' royal lineage but he also affirmed surety that Jesus was the promised Messiah who could heal him. When Bartimaeus cried out to Jesus many around him tried to silence him but that only made him cry out louder knowing that this was the chance of a lifetime to regain his sight so that he would be restored to life of dignity and wholeness. No one was going to take from him his chance to escape from his world of darkness. His persistent cries made Jesus stand still and ask him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" It is so interesting that just a few verses earlier in Mark 10:36 Jesus asked two of His disciples, James and John, the same question that He asked Bartimaeus to which they requested for special positions of power in His kingdom. In sharp contrast Bartimaeus knew precisely what his need was. Not only did he ask for what was most essential for him but also demonstrated perseverant faith in Jesus.

This passage compels us to reflect on several issues. Are we trying to silence the cries of the silent majority that are so desperately in need of Jesus' healing? As a Church are we obstacles rather than enablers in bringing the lost to salvation? Have we got so sensitized to the poor and the have-nots that we are no longer sensitive to their cries? After murdering his brother, Cain feigned ignorance when confronted by God. "Am I my brother's keeper?" he asked. And the Lord said, "The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground" (Gen.4:10). Jesus too was very receptive to the earnest cries of the people who needed Him. When Zacchaeus resolved to make a positive change, Jesus said, "For the Son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

As members of the body of Christ, the Church, we are mandated to further the healing ministry of Jesus and this is not restricted to the health professionals, hospitals and health agencies. It is in fact the calling and responsibility of every believer to look out for opportunities to reach out beyond the confines of our church boundaries to the marginalized, oppressed and ostracized people and exercise our spiritual gifts to be agents of positive change and transformation.

### **Food for thought/Points for further reflection:**

1. "The difference between cure and healing", how Jesus made him whole after listening to his cry as a marginalised person?
2. How can we partner with local health institutions and health professionals to bring about healing and wholeness to our communities?

**Prayer:** God of Light, we pray that You may make us sensitive to the cries of the people around us. To know their needs, and to help them whenever we can. In Jesus name, Amen.

## INSTRUMENTS IN HEALING MINISTRY

*“Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well”*

*James 5:13-16 NIV*

Healing Instruments of God are the people of the Church who believe in Christ and in the power of His resurrection.

### **Prayer as an important tool in the Healing ministry**

Prayer is the key that opens and releases jammed, lost and broken lives. It is not to be used as a mantra but as a simple, gentle, lovely nice talk with God expressing our needs to God our maker and redeemer. Prayer is a tool that makes us feel that God has listened and responded to our requests and needs. Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you 1 Peter 5:7 NKJV. In healing ministry, prayer of a righteous person can make a lot of difference to an individual. It is like bringing Gods presence to an individual who has doubts, questions and unwanted powers that are influencing him and to be touched and healed by a righteous person's prayer which is an intervention.

### **Faith as an important factor in the Healing Ministry**

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see” (Hebrews 11:1NIV). Faith in situations is the ability to work with God and extol Him in all contexts. Faith of His people challenges God to act and bring about the demonstration of His love in action. Faith moves God to restore people to their fullness and help them to understand the situation and experience healing. Faith is relatively a bridge that connects the past and the present making it known to His people that God is loving and constantly working for them.

### **Support of one another multiplies our outcome in the Healing ministry**

Team work, support and cooperation amongst us helps to multiply the work of God. It is important to acknowledge God for the healing he provides for His people. All healing comes from God - so whatever the healing that takes place amongst His people God has worked there and He is the source. There is a tendency to ignore or not attribute the healing to God when it takes place in a hospital through medical intervention like taking medicines/surgery/ or medical procedures.

When we hold our hands together and attribute to God for his Gift of healing, more healing will take place through our work. It can be also through counseling, listening, responding and empathizing with the individual at a time when they need help and support.

### **Food for thought/Points for further reflection:**

1. How can prayer and righteousness be counted for effective healing?
2. Is multiplication of our efforts possible in today's world?

**Prayer:** Thank you for making me an instrument of healing through prayer, faith and togetherness in partnership. In Jesus name, Amen.

## **BODY OF CHRIST IN HEALING MINISTRY - PARTNERSHIP**

*"God has appointed in the church ... gifts of healing..."*

*1 Corinthians 12: 27-30, 12*

We live in a world where everyone needs healing. We are all called to be healers along with God. It is important to see the larger picture of where we are and what we do. In the Indian context, we have a specific role to play and to achieve healing for our society.

Apostle Paul in his letter describes the nature of the church and its various gifts to the saints in Corinth. This letter is addressed to all who call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord. In the earlier section he describes that every Christian is a member of Christ's body whether prominent or hidden. Every member of the body is related to each other; in need of each other; and worthy of respect from each other. In good times and in times of suffering, they are together. When contributions of different parts of the body are appreciated, there is a beautiful harmony.

'Gifts of healing' refer to people with the power to heal diseases. Paul clearly notes that some people in the church have this gift and they are called to use their gifts of healing. In the church today, 'healing ministry' is one aspect of her total ministry. Therefore, we who are called to be part of this ministry should take this calling seriously and be part of Church's mission.

As partners, we have some challenges today. One area pertains to the acceptance of others in God's ministry like teaching, preaching, etc. Often there is lack of understanding, acceptance and mutuality with members involved in the other forms of ministry. 'My calling is greater'; 'My ministry is bigger', 'more important, and so on. This thought comes because of the lack of a larger vision. In addition, we in the healing ministry feel that our ministry is too critical for the body of Christ, unlike other forms of ministry. Is this thinking reasonable and justifiable? Definitely not.

Secondly, among those who are in the healing ministry, there is a sense of superiority among some co-workers (e.g. medical staff, nursing staff, allied health staff, etc.) Definitely this is a reflection of what is happening in the outside world (where Christ is not understood and upheld as the head). Often the value, worth and importance of a team member is assessed based on the education, training and the monetary value of a member (as assessed by the world). How pathetic it is!

When Christ is the head of the Church, our value, worth and importance come from the faithfulness and commitment we show in our given role and responsibility. That value system should be a model for the world to emulate.

### **Questions for discussion and reflection:**

1. As members of Christ's body how do we understand and respect those who are not directly involved in healing ministry?
2. What are some practical aspects we can implement to communicate that different members in the healing ministry are equally valued and respected?

**Prayer:** God of healing, we thank you for the gifts of healing you have given us. Help us to accept those who do not have this gift, yet part of your mission. Help us to value and respect each other even those who are in the healing ministry. Heal us, O God. Amen.

## WE ARE GODS CHANNELS OF WHOLISTIC HEALING OF THE NATION'S

*"And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse".*

*Rev 22:1-5 NIV*

Tree of life is fed by the water of life that is flowing and bearing fruit. The leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the Nations. There are no more curses which is a significant change to the quality of life as Jesus has promised abundance life to his people. The curse that brings disparity, sickness, pain, suffering, injustice, will be neutralized through our efforts when we are attached to the tree of life as leaves. The verse has end time events connotations (eschatological) but It is not something to happen later but the healing has begun through us.

The partnering effort of the church is to make the leaves of the tree of life for healing the nations. It is the church and its constituent believing members in Jesus who will nullify the curse through the fall of human race and it's repercussions of the curse on every nation and its citizens. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God(Rom 3:23) and this is reversed in by the leaves of the tree of life.

The church and its members are the channels of God's blessing in healing of the nations. We are the glimpses of that hope for the people to see, feel and experience life that God can demonstrate through each on of us as members of the body of Christ. We are the leaves that bring healing to the nations.

Human beings constantly ask this question where is God in my time of despair, need and crisis and illness. It is our role as the Church to reveal God and the gift of that is possible by accepting and acknowledging God as the source of life who wants to use us as the healers of His Creation. It's a special privilege and honor to serve a God who is constantly calling us to respond to the needs of his people to be his hand, feet thus reflecting His love.

Human beings are in need to discover the God of their creation and realize who is the owner of every individual. I am fearfully and wonderfully made I want discover/see, feel experience my creator. As Paul exhorts the Colossian church that Christ is the image of the invisible God and today we as the Church gives that visibility of the love of God in Healing the nations.

### **Food for thought/Points for further reflection:**

1. How can we bring forth the healing presence of God to help human beings to experience the healing?
2. How can we partnership with Christ in healing of nation's?

**Prayer:** Loving God thank you for identifying me as a source of healing. Help me to be transformed to transform others. In Jesus name, Amen.