

NEVER

THE STORY OF A BROKEN MAN

GIVE

IMPACTING A GENERATION

UP

K . P . Y O H A N N A N

(Moran Mor Athanasius Yohan I, Metropolitan of Believers Eastern Church)



a division of GFA World

www.gfa.org

Never Give Up: The Story of a Broken Man Impacting a Generation

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*This book is affectionately dedicated to those
who helped me survive this chaos.*

*To my wife, Gisela, and my son, Daniel,
who embraced my grief and pain in silence.*

*To my precious staff around the world, especially in the
U.S., who steadfastly stood with me during these years of
trial. Throughout this crisis, they each fought their own
battles, and only they know in full what that took.*

*To my dear friend and brother Francis Chan.
Thank you for being Christ to me during my journey
through the forest fire of grief.*



*But in the end, it's only
a passing thing, this shadow.*

Even darkness must pass.

a new day will come.

And when the sun shines,

it will shine out the clearer.

*Those were the stories
that stayed with you ...*

*Folk in those stories
had lots of chances of turning back,
only they didn't.*

*They kept going,
because they were holding on to something ...
and it's worth fighting for.*

— *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*¹



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FOREWORD



I have been inspired and challenged reading this powerful book by my brother in Christ and very dear friend, K.P. Yohannan. But for me this tells an even bigger story. It's an amazing account of God's hand upon the work K.P. Yohannan founded, which is now one of the largest ministries in the world. He is today probably our most famous OM graduate.

My relationship with him goes back over half a century. There are lots of memories during that span of time, but I especially remember him with the ship ministry when we were in Indonesia. I still have a photo of him sitting on the platform when we had a meeting in a huge stadium. Little did we know then what God had planned for him. I wish I had kept in better contact in those early years and been more of a help and blessing.

Then came his book, *Revolution in World Missions*,* dedicated to me. I found that some of what he wrote I disagreed with. We had an important meeting in Nepal, and he listened, and we came to an agreement and better understanding. Because of our conversation, he made some changes to the book. *Only* history will tell how much God has used his book, *Revolution in World Missions*.

I don't think you will understand what I am trying to say in this foreword if you have not read my latest book, *Messiology*.† You don't have to agree with all that he has written in this book to learn from it and enjoy it.

When K.P. Yohannan was brutally attacked in the media, I felt led to stand with him. He has always been willing to meet with me and pray with me and answer my questions. I heard his confessions and saw his humility and brokenness, and I knew the hand of the Lord was upon him. That is no small thing for me. I was grieved when Christians took him to court, which the Bible speaks against. Once that happens, everything becomes more complex, and you have to be careful about every word that comes out of your

* Available for free download at www.gfa.org.

† Available at Amazon.

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mouth. It's a difficult path to find your way as you follow advice from professionals and listen to God and His Word. I felt articles in even the Christian press were often unfair and lacked facts and the big picture. It was difficult to watch.

If people could see what I have seen of the work of GFA, they would write differently. The work was, in fact, 10 times larger and deeper than I had imagined. Without question, GFA is one of the greatest works of God in our generation. The leadership team, called *episcopas* (bishops), is outstanding. This term is easily understood in the East. It's *not* the one-man show like many people imagine it to be, but I don't expect people to understand an Indian Apostle Paul of this generation.

K.P. Yohannan is an imperfect human being—but one with a pure heart, great passion and vision—indwelt by the Holy Spirit. You have a history-making, unique book in your hands, and I pray you will be blessed as you read this, and that it will help you along the road of your own life and ministry, especially in troubled times of your own.

George Verwer

Founder of Operation Mobilization International

THANK YOU



Thank you so much Jeena, Stephanie, Kendra, Teresa, David and Karen, for your hard work to get this manuscript ready. Thank you also to Nathan, Michelle, Susan, Carol and Keith, for the time and sacrifice you put into helping get this book ready to print, and to Lisa for the amazing work you did with the interior design. Thank you, Vanessa, for all you did in designing the beautiful cover. George Verwer, I can't thank you enough for writing the foreword for this book.

All glory to the Holy Trinity. Thank You for the awesome privilege I was given to see the Invisible through this journey of grief and fear.

INTRODUCTION



Over a year ago, I felt the need to write this book. I dismissed the idea out of dread of reliving the grief and fear that filled four years in my journey, the part of it that I call “walking through the forest fire.” But the feeling persisted and turned into a burden, which led me to pray and ask the Lord for His will and guidance.

This is how the writing of this book began.

One of the first instructions from the Lord was to read the second letter St. Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church and read it again and again until I understood the spirit in which he wrote it. I did not keep track of the number of times I read 2 Corinthians, but finally my heart saw, so vividly, *the heart of St. Paul* in writing that letter, and this is how the Lord led me to follow St. Paul’s example in writing this book.

Please don't misunderstand me. I do not claim that what I write is inspired or supernatural. Rather, I found parallels of what I faced in Apostle Paul's writing. He had dealt with a situation similar to what I've been through recently—a season of criticism, misunderstanding, rejection, betrayal, accusation, and so on. But St. Paul, led by the Spirit of God, laid down his will to defend or respond to his critics as natural men would do. Instead, he chose to answer all their allegations by narrating his own journey of suffering and grief for the sake of His master. My whole world became brighter and more peaceful as I saw the way St. Paul responded to his critics and betrayers—and he did it with love and kindness.

Instead of focusing on the attacks he faced from people, he saw the bigger picture of the Holy Church and responded with pure love for his enemies. This way, then, became my model in writing this book.

Still, in my natural mind, I did have to understand how to take the dozen different tracks I wanted to follow, and yet have it be a cohesive whole leading to one destination. Having authored more than 275 books, I am not naïve about the roadmap to writing them. But this one is quite different from anything else I have written.

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Now I understand why the Lord directed me to read 2 Corinthians countless times until I understood the spirit that moved St. Paul's writing. His personal life could not be separated from his passion for the Holy Church and from those who had never heard Christ's name.¹ And I realized, in the same way, my own personal journey cannot be separated from the world of the Holy Church and related matters that make sense of my life and the worldview I hold.

This book is a collection of my experiences and a reliving of events of these past few years in my journey with Christ and His Church.

This book is not an attempt to *defend* myself. I will leave that to the Lord. Rather, I offer to share what it was like to live through some incredibly difficult days, all the while growing in understanding how the Lord would use our struggle for the furtherance of His Kingdom, just as He has redeemed the struggles of His people time and time again since the beginning.

My prayer for this book is that my openness, sincerity and vulnerability will be an encouragement to you, dear reader, in your walk with God. I know that I am hardly the only Christ-follower to have had false information spread about them, so I trust that

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my carefully chosen words will provide hope to fellow wounded warriors.

I am also bold to believe that, through these pages, you will learn to find strength from the marvelous example of the early Church and the blueprint given to us in the Book of Acts.

I also hope that reading these pages will help you understand the ministry of GFA and the incredible work God is doing through our brothers and sisters around the world in these last days.

Finally, I want this book to convey a message of deep gratitude to the countless individuals and numerous congregations around the world that chose to believe the best about this all-too-human follower of Christ and the work He has called us to do.

And for all of us, the finish line is in sight. *Let's never give up.*



CHAPTER ONE

CAST INTO CHAOS



*Live in faith and hope, though it be in darkness,
for in this darkness God protects the soul.*

— St. John of the Cross¹

It had been an ordinary day until that moment. My phone beeped, and I saw that I'd been sent a link. I clicked on it, as I usually do, and that was when everything stopped being usual and ordinary. My heart began to pound.

It was a report that one of the world's largest mission agencies was starting to collapse. Accusations of financial mismanagement, donor deception, negligent board oversight and more filled the screen. But what made it all the more devastating was that *I* was the one being written about, and it was *our mission*—GFA World—that was in the crosshairs.

I remember that moment, I couldn't even fathom what I could have done to merit such an attack. From the beginning, in my mind, these allegations were all false and unfounded.

A thousand thoughts overwhelmed me. They were not well-organized insights; rather, they were a jumble of disorganization. It was like bedlam in my mind.

Until that day, my life had been busy but manageable. But now chaos marked my life. Never had I experienced something so disruptive. And unfortunately, that first link I clicked wouldn't be the last such article to negatively impact my life and the ministry the Lord had entrusted to me. Little did I know that I was at the beginning of a valley of chaos and turmoil, my test that would last for what would feel like forever.



Chaotic behavior exists in numerous natural systems. An example would be weather patterns. For the most part they are predictable—but never with perfect precision. That's because even small changes in data can have a profound effect on an eventual outcome.

Unexpected, chaotic incidents affect people every day. Your healthy young husband or father is diagnosed

as having an aggressive lymphoma, and he is gone just a few months later.

You have your ideal job. Then one day you are unexpectedly called into your boss's office and informed that it is over, just like that.

You win all kinds of awards for your aggressive style of play . . . then an injury changes everything, including the trajectory of your life.

You discover your best friend has betrayed you. You are devastated.

Coming home on the expressway, a tire blows on your car, and you are the cause of a multi-auto accident. You cause irreversible harm to others and yourself, in mind and body.

Someone you trusted too much robs you of your life savings and vanishes.

Or you begin to realize that a group of people, for whatever their reasons, is determined to strip you of your reputation and ministry, and, apparently, they will stop at nothing as they pursue their goal.

It takes a while to wrap your head around it and to realize that everything about how you live your life must change before you can even start to respond to such situations.

But it didn't take long to understand that what we were facing at GFA was not an attack of flesh and blood, but of the powers of darkness.² Having faced numerous complicated situations in the past, I assumed this was another similar problem to deal with. When you are the founder of a missions movement that is scattered throughout the world, crossing hundreds of cultures, involving people groups with well over 300 languages, one can only imagine the complexity of dealing with the ever-changing nature of such an experience. Falling back on well-learned patterns, I said to myself, *Trust in the Lord. Mobilize prayer and keep the focus on bringing Christ's love to this desperate and hungry world.* And that's what I determined to do.

In retrospect, I was naïve. I hadn't yet realized the size and scope and craftiness of the assault gathering against us. This was not to be a one-and-done attack. Large and relentless, these negative forces quickly established an ever-increasing momentum that proved next to impossible to stop.

Our staff were inundated with phone calls about these charges as the article and other accusations spread. More letters needed to be answered than could be managed by our qualified workers. Accusations from

hostile bloggers were quoted (would you believe) even in religious publications. Negative news articles were written and published without an attempt to hear our side of the story. It felt like I was living in a nightmare with no way to wake up.

I must not get bogged down by these distractions, I told myself. As Robert Frost wrote, “But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep”³ That’s the attitude I attempted to maintain. So, I kept on traveling to the many countries where we minister, just as St. Paul did in the days of the early Church. I still had to lead my team and the countless believers God has entrusted to us. I had no choice. My schedule was full.



I boarded yet another 20-hour flight from Dallas, Texas, that would take me to a remote part of the great land of India where I was born and raised. It is an amazing country with beautiful people, many of whom now love the Lord.

Finally, I arrived at the southern point of the country. This is where the St. Thomas Community and the global headquarters of Believers Eastern Church is located. Believers Eastern Church (BEC) is the massive

church movement that was born as the result of doing missions, following the same pattern as what was recorded in St. Matthew 28:19–20 and Acts 13.

I was so glad to be back in my home country and community. How nice it would be to lie down in my own bed and rest for a day or so before getting into the battle again! The wooden leaves of my favorite Hunter ceiling fan turned ever so slowly and silently above my bed. This old, one-bedroom house was built 260 years ago by skilled carpenters. It is all made of wood—walls, ceilings, roof and floor. I imagine simple chisels and a wooden hammer were the tools used to construct it. This 1,800-square-foot house has a 45-degree pitched roof, and it's beautiful.

This home is the official residence (officially called *aramana*, a name used by eastern churches in this part of the world) of the Metropolitan of Believers Eastern Church. The title *Metropolitan* is a term used to describe the head bishop of a church. (I will share with you a little later how I came to hold this position). The Metropolitan is considered the first among equals, and he works together with a team of other bishops to lead the church, just as bishops have been doing since the beginning of the Holy Church.

When I am no longer serving as the Metropolitan, this house and all its contents will pass on to the person who takes my place. It belongs fully to the church, not to me.

The house sits about a quarter of a mile from the Believers Eastern Church global headquarters (the Synod Secretariat) where oversight is given to all the church's administrative regions, or dioceses, scattered throughout the world. The Synod Secretariat is located on our 180-acre wooded church property, filled with so many kinds of flowers and plants and more than 350 different kinds of wild birds. Everywhere you look you see rolling hills with winding roads. Walk a little further and you come upon our 11-acre lake, filled 30–65 feet deep with clean, pure water, which freely provides water to the entire community and all the staff and seminary students who reside there. The centerpiece of our community is St. Thomas Believers Eastern Church Cathedral where our daily prayer meetings and various services take place. The entire campus is purposely set apart from the chaos of the world to promote a quiet and meditative atmosphere, designed to direct all attention to God.

It is late at night, and I'm jetlagged because I have flown from the other side of the globe. Yet I am unable

to sleep. All the lights are off in the house except for one. That's the oil lamp out in the foyer. It presents a picture of prayerfulness and the presence of God. Two security guards are outside to protect the Metropolitan's life in case of any attack from extremists of one kind or another. Other than that, it is incredibly quiet. I turn on a low-wattage side lamp beside my bed. It makes the darkness feel soft. My leather, three-ring file sits nearby, reminding me of all the many matters to which I must soon attend. They include several trips that are already planned to dozens of dioceses in various parts of Asia. And then there's another College of Bishops* just around the corner.

Sleep escapes me and is replaced by such a sense of foreboding as I have never known before. Once again, my heart begins to pound, like a warning drum. The thunderstorm of accusations returns in full force, flooding my mind with the charges against the ministry, my integrity, our passion for missions and our sincerity for the Lord. My whole world feels shaken to the core. In response I attempt to pray. I clutch the small, wooden holding cross I keep near my bed and begin asking God

* A *College of Bishops* is an official gathering of bishops for a time of prayer and making decisions.

to help me. I wonder if there are demons present that I need to cast out.

If you are wondering, *What on earth happened to him that he is facing such onslaught and crisis?* please bear with me and read on. In chapter 2, I explain why we were cast into such chaos of grief and pain.

As the leader of one of the largest missions in the world, I was always radically committed to keeping my conscience void of any offense toward man and God, with my one and only passion being for my Lord and His Holy Church. But I am now in despair. I had no warning of the magnitude of chaos that would assault me and which now threatened to consume my mind.

I do not know if this experience of mine is the kind of emotional trauma Job of old faced.⁴ Everything had been going so well with him and his family. His integrity and reputation were impeccable—he feared God in all his ways.

Even the Lord Almighty testified about Job as “a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil.”⁵ But all of a sudden, without any warning, his world was turned upside down. His wealth vanished, all his children died, his best friends turned against him with harsh accusations, and a community

that had respected him began to mock him. Finally, his own wife advised him to “curse God and die”⁶ to end his suffering. And would you believe, on top of all this, his fragile body was stricken with awful sores, blood and pus oozing out of these boils.⁷

What do you do when life casts you into confusion? Nothing makes sense. Everything spins out of control. You have no control over what is happening to you. It seems even the foundation you stood on is sucked into this terrible black hole. And your loudest scream is heard by no rescuer.

Is this what King David meant when he said, “My heart is severely pained within me, and the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me” (Psalm 55:4–5)? Is this the kind of disappointment that prompted the prophet Elijah to want to die?⁸

I toss and turn in my bed in the semi-dark room. I can't focus. I can't think straight. I wonder if I am going to have a mental breakdown. I know even godly people, like Dr. E. Stanley Jones (1884–1973), who spent much of his time as a missionary in India,⁹ and others, were reported to have had mental breakdowns. St. Teresa of Calcutta said, “As far as I am concerned, the

greatest suffering is to feel alone, unwanted, unloved.”¹⁰
That’s where I feel I am—all “alone into the alone.”¹¹

I just want to give up and have this nightmare end.
This is what often happens when someone is in chaos.

Possibly this is what King Solomon writes about in Ecclesiastes 1:2–11, where he mentions that all of life is nothing but chasing the wind. He asks himself, “What is even the point of living?”



The nearest I had ever come to such feelings before was back in 1974, just a few weeks after I went to the USA for my college education. My father, who was 74, passed away without any warning. From our tiny village, Niranam, my family tried to call me on the telephone from their trunk line system* for a whole week. My mother and brothers sat in the living room waiting for my return call, but it never came. In the end, they sent me a telegram that simply read, “Father passed away,” with the date and time. I was all alone in a strange land, no family, relatives or friends. I remember going out and sitting under a big tree where I cried and cried for so long.

* A *trunk line* is a system of calling involving one or more lines and telephone exchanges.

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In the movie *Before and After*,¹² a young girl reminisces about the time her teenage brother was accused of murder. In one scene she says, “Your whole life can change in a second, and you never know when it’s coming. Before, you think you know what kind of world this is. And after, everything is different for you. Not bad maybe, not always, but different . . . forever. I didn’t even know there could be such a thing as *after*. I didn’t know that for us, *before* was already over.”

The turmoil that followed that moment in time for the girl threatened to destroy her entire family. Life never returned to what it once was for them. The “after” sucked her into the complex arena of rumors, lies, betrayal, distress, alienation and despair. Now in this dark night, I ask myself whether my life, family, ministry or church will ever be the same again.

I have dealt with endless complicated issues in my 50 years of serving God, and most of them while I was in some form of leadership role. I could handle them. But this is not just *complicated*; it is *complex*; it is a fabrication, and I cannot see where it is leading. It is like a hurricane or tsunami that hits with inadequate warning. My well-trained, logical mind struggles to find some reason for this crisis, but I can find nothing

I have done, no wrong that merits this frustration, grief and fear. Please don't misunderstand me, I don't mean to imply that I have not *failed* in my life; I have more times than I can even count.¹³ But to my best knowledge, I had *not* committed the many acts that were being alleged against me now.

Finally, I give up. It is getting late. I push the button on my Timex wristwatch, and it lights up, telling me it is two in the morning.

I lay awake, overcome with panic and fear. I pick up one of the books I had been reading, by C.S. Lewis, and the words I read bring some comfort to my troubled heart, which had begun to hurt even more with doubts about God Himself.

C.S. Lewis writes, "Go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find? A door slammed in your face, and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence. . . . The conclusion I dread is not 'So there's no God after all,' but 'So this is what God's really like. Deceive yourself no longer.'"¹⁴

I think to myself, *I can't believe C.S. Lewis went through this same valley of grief and doubts in which I now find myself.*

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I am so exhausted, but I still can't sleep! I think to myself, *I may be losing my mind*. Then suddenly a soft and unnerving voice is heard, as though someone is whispering in my ear, "Kill yourself. There is no other way out. That will end your terrible pain." The voice becomes increasingly strong inside my head. Fear chokes me. I can hardly breathe.

My thoughts now turn to how I might commit this act. I look at the ceiling fan that is some 15 feet above me, and it is as though some foreign personality is guiding my actions: "Take that piece of cloth over there, tie the knot; you can quickly end it all by hanging yourself. It's not that hard. There's no one here. You can do it."

Self-pity begins to take over. I think to myself, *I have given my all to God and the Holy Church. Why is this happening to me?*

Now I am past 65 years of age and feel all alone. I break out in cold sweat and sit up in my bed to pray again. I repeat a simple prayer known as the Jesus Prayer over and over, just as countless believers since the early years of the Church have done: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."¹⁵ Physically reminding myself I belong to Christ, I make

the sign of the cross—an action I’ve practiced for the last several years.

Despite my counter-efforts, I feel like my room is full of dark figures—demons attacking my mind. Never before have I experienced anything like this. I have cast out demons, seen the blind receive their sight, and witnessed scores of people set free from satanic bondage. I have studied demonology, read the early Church’s writings on Satan and his works and how to deal with such attacks. I have even written books on spiritual warfare. But believe me, I have never before been in a personal encounter like this with evil forces seeking my very life.

Like a movie in my mind, I can see my dead body being carried down to the predetermined burial place for the Metropolitan. The multitude gathering for the funeral includes all our bishops, clergy and missionaries.

I did not know that silence could be so real, almost more real than matter. I have helped so many all over the world, but now I feel as though God has abandoned me.

My door is shut and locked, and I am walled in. I look up and all I can see is the fan, which is my means of ending this terrible pain and grief. As C.S. Lewis once wrote, “No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear.”¹⁶

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Miracle!

Suddenly, as if out of nowhere, my room seems to light up. My fears and anxiety, like thick-piled snow, start to melt away. As I come to my senses, I am so ashamed and guilty for allowing myself to forget who I am in Christ and what I represent. Everything changes. Maybe someone was praying for me. It feels just like when, in *The Chronicles of Narnia*,¹⁷ the lion, Aslan, (who represents Christ) is once again on the move after a long period of silence and winter. What looked like eternal snow is quickly melting away all through the land of Narnia. The trees and birds and wildlife are all coming back. And I can almost feel this new life. Thanks to Him, I am still alive!



I apologize for writing so long about the chaos and grief I had to endure. That awful night in India, I was tempted to take my life. But the trouble had been building for the last few years on the other side of the globe in East Texas where the American headquarters for GFA World is located.

Just like the St. Thomas Community in India, there is a beautiful community in America as well!

It is situated on some 700 acres of land just an hour away from the city of Dallas, Texas. We moved there in August 2014 when the cost of living on the outskirts of Dallas (our previous headquarters location) rose too high. Our move to this campus in East Texas would save the ministry millions in overhead expenses, meaning even more funds could be sent to the field.

This campus, too, features a beautiful church where our people gather for prayer and worshipping God. St. Peter's Believers Eastern Church is the center of our community life.

I was there when I first discovered that a handful of people were determined to destroy us and this good work the Lord has raised up. It was there that the rumors began, which prompted the writing of that magazine article, and where a lawsuit was eventually filed against us. The rumormongers accused some of our leaders, including me, of fraud and embezzlement. They accused us of being a cult. I initially laughed this off, saying to myself that we had nothing to worry about because the accusations were so absurd. But soon I realized that people were beginning to believe these accusations and that the assault against us was taking root. It felt like a Lucifer-led attack.

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Honestly, I never dreamed our ministry and family would face accusations such as those that were made in the lawsuit. Throughout our existence, our heart and our passion have always been to bring Christ's love to a broken and hurting world. We did not look for personal gain. Above all, we sought to honor the Lord in our personal lives, in the way we serve, and by maintaining our integrity.

It has been our practice every year to evaluate our ministry and undergo an independent audit. In 2015, our governing board received a confidential letter from a financial standards association we were part of, and of which we were a charter member, pointing out that our accounting practices needed to better conform to the requirements set by that association. Despite the unique challenges our organization faces by supporting ministry in certain parts of the world, we immediately set out to implement changes based off their letter and even hired a new auditing firm to help us.

One of the things we were criticized for was the cash reserves we kept on the field, which should be considered a best practice for all ministries serving in a volatile environment. This was done as an act of good stewardship, to be sure we had funds to care for the thousands

of children in our Bridge of Hope centers, along with so many other ministries we are responsible for. In fact, this measure we took is the only reason we were able to survive on the field during these years of struggle and trial.

Unfortunately, the confidential letter was sent by someone we trusted to a number of people, including a blogger, and its contents were put on social media to damage us. Around the same time, a former staff member sent out a negative letter about us to many of our donors.

We quickly learned the eye-opening lesson that social media, which can be an incredible tool for good, can also be used as a horrible weapon of destruction—when coupled with the power of gossip and slander—to make false accusations go viral and destroy the reputation of others. Too often we hear stories of these rogue actions destroying the life of a godly pastor, church or organization at little cost to the accuser.

Soon after this chaos began, we lost staff members and several thousand supporters. Together with our leadership team, we prayed and tried to reconcile with those who had distanced themselves as a result of the false allegations. Unfortunately, we soon learned that a lawsuit had been filed, which eventually turned into

a class action case that enlisted all our supporters as plaintiffs. For that reason, we were severely limited in what we could freely say publicly, and so the explanation of our side of the story was mostly limited to the filings in the lawsuit during those years.

In the meantime, we submitted to the organizational and personal financial investigations under the due process of the court. We even went one step further and retained one of the top four internationally renowned accounting firms to conduct an objective analysis of the flow of GFA World's funds to the field. The field leaders also hired the same top accounting firm's counterpart to review all the funds from overseas and how they had been used. This took an enormous amount of time and money. The audit on the field side alone took a year to complete and cost roughly \$1 million USD (which was paid for by the church on the field). In the end, it was concluded that *all* the money given had indeed made it to the field—a conclusion we knew to be true from the very beginning. There was *no* evidence of missing funds or self-enrichment as the accusations against us claimed.

After three years of enormous financial and personal strain to sustain the ministry and pay large legal

fees, the court asked us to attempt to settle. Several senior Christian leaders strongly advised us to take this road. Our board members met and decided, after careful consideration, to accept the settlement, knowing that if the lawsuit continued for another two to three years, nothing would be left of the ministry's resources or reputation.

For me, it was an agonizing struggle to know we would have to pay money that could have been used to help thousands of abandoned widows and children living on the streets. Yet to save the ministry, we had to take this difficult step, trusting the Lord to lift us up once more.

This period of being accused and investigated as a fraud and deserted by close friends was probably the most difficult and loneliest time of my life. I can't tell you how many times I nearly gave up. At times, I had no hope left that the ministry could survive the assault. But we had much to learn through all these difficulties, and the Lord was gracious to see us through. He sustained us through the faithful friends who believed in us and prayed for us.

What blessed me most throughout this long and painful journey was that, even though we suffered

much heartache and financial strain, the Lord enabled us to sustain the work being done in some 16 nations. I was amazed to see how the Lord continued to move and work through us, despite the trials we were enduring. For example, in 2018, just one year during that time:

- 289,753 women received free health care training.
- 61,800 illiterate women learned to read and write through our literacy classes.
- 1,132 medical camps were conducted in needy communities, which helped care for tens of thousands of people.
- 4,712 clean water wells (Jesus Wells) were drilled and 11,451 BioSand water filters were installed in communities that needed clean water.
- 25,000 needy individuals and families received warm blankets.
- Hundreds of thousands of poor people were helped through income-generating gifts.
- More than 70,000 children were helped to find hope for a better future through Gospel for Asia's Bridge of Hope Program. (Please read my book *No Longer a Slumdog*¹⁸ to get a full picture of this amazing part of our ministry to the poorest of the poor in numerous needy nations.)
- By God's grace and mercy, as I write this, we now have more than 12,000 well-established

local congregations in 16 nations, and we continue to reach out to new regions with the love of Christ. Another 3,000 fellowships gather even now to grow deeper in their walks with the Lord, and we believe they too will soon turn into established churches.

- More than 2,500 young adults have committed their lives to serve the Lord in our dozens of seminaries throughout the world's neediest nations. Preparations are also underway to expand our medical services to African nations and to set up seminaries on that continent to train the younger generation to serve the Lord.

This is for the year 2018, but this is not an exception. For more than 40 years, we have seen results similar to these of what the Lord has done.



We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right

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hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (2 Corinthians 6:3–10).

I've read Apostle Paul's words again and again. I've imagined the endless pain, the abuse, the grief, the accusations, the close-to-breakdown experiences, the imprisonment, and yes, the betrayals by friends and co-workers, and I've often thought to myself, *Apparently this is the delivery charge I also have been given to pay, by my suffering and embracing death to myself, to be able to take Christ to the ends of the earth. Well, so be it, Lord.*

How wonderful that now I can open the old, wooden door of my home (*aramana*) in India and see the sun coming up. The night *is* gone. I say to myself, *How foolish I was to wallow in self-pity. I acted as a senseless animal, like the godly man in the psalms.*¹⁹ The expanse of the Kingdom is often bloody. The enemy's bullets are not blanks! All too often they are real. So are Satan and his millions of demons real! But without being willing to do battle and even die if necessary,

we will never fulfill the call of God. He wishes for the world He created for us to be reconciled with the Holy Trinity. But, thank God, no one can kill a man who, for all practical purposes, is already dead to himself!

There is a saying in my native language, “The massive, wooden log is a heavy burden for the elephant, and the same is true for the ant that carries a grain of rice.” As you read the account of this struggling pilgrim, I am certain you, too, have gone through, or are even now going through, your own Gethsemane. Please believe me, the sun *will* rise. Hold on. Let us not forget God’s unchanging promise, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). You are *never* alone. I can’t imagine how I would have survived if it were not for the prayers of God’s people.

The only response when we are plunged into chaos is to let go, let it be, and abandon our life completely into His hands.



When we’re cast into chaos and faced with suffering, our whole being longs for a way out, but often we find it is only the beginning of a journey through the forest fire of grief where we feel God is suddenly silent.

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Yet, we want to know the *why* of this pain, what is the cause? In the next chapter we will talk about the reason for our crisis and pain.

The question remains forever without a satisfying answer: *Why do the righteous suffer?* Job must have asked that a thousand times. Perhaps some things are destined to remain a mystery!

But we know that God works *all* things together for our good²⁰—all bad things and all good things. God is in control of *all* that we face in life, and we must trust Him in the bad, as well as the good.

The choice not to give up is *mine*. It is also *yours*.

