

The Healing of the Woman with Hemorrhage and Talitha Cum as Models for Dalit Liberation

ELIZABETH JOY
INDIA

Introduction

The era of globalisation has devoured communities across the world, crossing geographical and cultural boundaries and imposing its prominent effects - homogenisation and exclusion. The stark reality of the increasing levels of poverty is exhibiting the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor; unemployment; oppressions on the basis of gender, race, class, caste, region, and religion; “wars against terrorism”; violence against women, Dalits, Tribals, and aboriginals, in the name of development where people are disturbed, displaced, dispossessed, dehumanised and destroyed; sex-tourism; the spread of HIV/AIDS when medicines are available but unaffordable. These are the clear marks of the impact of globalisation.

The over-production of goods, which is another distinct phenomena of globalisation has resulted in exhausting nature’s resources. The over-production of unwanted materials like plastics and the abundant production of adulterated fuels, including the exorbitant amount of poisonous substances, and heat released by the use of war weapons, have increased pollution in the air and water affecting the agricultural fields, and farm lands, causing a threat to the very food that we eat, the air that we breathe, and the water that we drink. By raping mother earth, the resulting pollution is contributing to health disorders in many parts of the world and causing worsening ecological problems.

This paper examines the impact of globalisation in a Dalit context which is in dire need of healing, being restored to life, and experiencing liberation (fullness of life). The healing of the woman with hemorrhage and the raising of the girl-child (*Talitha Cum!*) are seen as models of liberation in this context (Mark 5: 21-43). The purpose of this paper is to outline the Indian scenario in relation to the impact of globalisation in the Dalit context

and provide broad indicators of change and transformation in the light of the above two miracles of Jesus which continue to challenge us. Therefore the discussions in this paper focus on the following:

I The Meaning and Definition of Globalisation

II The Reality of Dalits within Indian Society

III A Theological Response from a Dalit Perspective

I MEANING AND DEFINITION OF GLOBALISATION

Globalisation can be defined as a phenomenon with many controversial expressions that touch all aspects of life in terms of relations between a) human beings and the world; b) human beings and themselves; c) human beings and God. From my context of India, it is experienced as the “trans-nationalisation of capital, the internalisation of labour, the homogenisation of culture, the globalisation of production, and the standardisation of tastes.”¹ This targets the creation of a new “global village,” where the old borders disappear but simultaneously new dividing walls are erected leading to distinct polarisation within and in-between nations. The process of globalisation is tuned to seek-out cheap labour and production, promoting consumerism, and aiming at profit, resulting in the depletion of natural resources in the so-called developing countries. The constant move to better markets with increased profits is now making its impact felt even in the so-called developed worlds, threatening increased competition and unemployment. While it is a blessing that people in the so-called developing world (where cheap labour is available) are increasingly employed, workers are being put under a lot of pressure to maintain the expected daily output under a stringent hire and fire policy. These are comparatively high salaries within the societies of the so-called developing world, but for the Multi/Trans National Companies (MNC'S & TNC'S) it amounts to peanuts. This situation brings an imbalance in the economic life where a few sectors of people suddenly have a higher purchasing power, leaving the majorities in a rat race. Because of soaring prices, the majorities are

¹ Rosemary Vishwanath, ed. *Globalisation: Marginalisation of Dalits, Women & Tribals*, (Bangalore, Solidarity, 1998), pp. 59-60.

further marginalised from the daily markets and deprived of many common commodities which were within their purchasing power earlier. The following statistics will reveal the real impact of economic globalisation:²

- 20% of the world's richest people use over 86% of the world's resources whereas a little over 1% is divided among the poorest fifth;
- women comprise 70% of the world's poorest, 2/3 of the world's illiterate, 80% of the world's refugees are women and children. Refugees are created continuously both in the name of wars and development – where people become refugees within their own lands;
- women control 1% of the world's property, 10% of the world's income, under 7% of the world's ministerial posts, less than 14% of the world's management posts;
- women comprise 30% of the single providers in the world's households. Single women are the providers in 80-90% of the poorest families.

The process of globalisation is making its impact to be increasingly felt not only in the so-called developing countries, but even in the so-called developed nations. The above statistics reveal the fact that globalisation has marginalised women, individuals, communities, countries, and natural resources with its dominant, hierarchical and ruthless destruction of nature and its resources, through mass production, market-profit driving forces, promoting a consumerist life-style where ultimately the consumers become the consumed. In such a context, where are the Dalits placed, especially Dalit women? A look at Dalit realities in India will make a link between the impact of globalisation and the increasing burdens on not just the cost of living, but on the cost of survival. This will lead to some reflections on our response as Christians, and especially Christian youth/students.

² For detailed information on economic issues in globalisation and its impact on women refer to *Economic Globalisation: A Challenge for women*, (FOKUS – Forum for Women and Development, Norway: 2002 2nd Edition), pp. 3-5.

II REALITY OF DALITS WITHIN THE INDIAN SOCIETY

1. Dalits within the Indian Caste Structure

Dalits constitute nearly 25% of the Indian Population numbering about 240 million out of the 1033.4 million populations as according to the 2001 census.³ The government itself puts it between 16-19% with much reluctance after forcefully gathering a sizeable percentage under the Hindu religion.

Indian society is hierarchically segregated into castes on the basis of the concept of purity and pollution. They are marked in this hierarchical order according to religious perspective on how each caste was created. The Brahmins, who are believed to have come out of the head of God Brahma, are the ruling class and they have the control over the society and the access to all knowledge, especially the spiritual knowledge and the role of priesthood and teachers. The Kshatriyas, who are believed to have come out of the shoulders of God Brahma, are the rulers and warriors. The Vysyas are believed to have come out of the thighs of God Brahma and are the merchants and traders, while Sudras, who are considered to have come out from the legs of God Brahma, are the labourers and artisans. The Dalits, who are assigned the most polluting jobs, are not even placed within the caste system and their very proximity is considered to be polluting. Their touch pollutes and therefore they are also called the *untouchables*, *the outcastes*, or the *fifth caste*.⁴ The caste system has been practised in this region for the last 3000 years. While the Tribals (the indigenous peoples of India) have been alienated from their rightful land, their livelihood, and their self identity, the Dalits have been dehumanized on account of social ostracisation through untouchability. Untouchability is expressed in the form segregation, dehumanisation, and the denial of human rights, and operates on the basis of the concept of purity and pollution, which propagates stigma and discrimination. Dalits are seen as contaminating anything that they touch, as they are polluted people due to their works in polluted circumstances, and also because of their mixed blood which is considered to be impure.

³ *National Human Development Report*, 2003.

⁴ For details refer, Patricia Gossman, ed. *Broken People: Caste Violence against India's Untouchables* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), pp. 2-35.

The word Dalit means *crushed, split asunder, oppressed, suppressed, cut open, scattered*, etc. It is both a sociological and theological term referring to people and their deprivation and dehumanisation. A.P. Nirmal who is a pioneer Dalit theologian uses this term in his theological constructions with meanings similar to what I have expressed here.⁵

1. The Indian Scenario

India ranks 127th in the Human Development Index of the *World Development Report*. According to the 2000-2001 Report, India had moved to fourth position among the world's leading economies in terms of the purchasing power parity next to U.S.A., China, and Japan. The irony in the same report is that India has about 36% of its population below the official poverty line, which is about 360 million of its total population (1000 million). Gandhi said that India lives in her villages. Because of the impact of globalisation, the reality today is that India is dying in her villages. The share of income within India's poorest 10% is 3.5% of the total income and consumption. That of the poorest 20% is 8.1% compared to the richest 20% which is 46.1%, while that of the richest 10% is 33.5%. While the Indian Government spends 4.1% on education, it spends 2.5% on the military when a large percentage of its population is under the poverty line struggling for basic amenities.⁶ 72% of the Indian population is in the rural areas with just 28% in the urban areas.

2. Plight of Dalits

i. Dalits as landless labourers and workers in the unorganised sectors:

93% of the total working class in India belong to unorganised labour, which does not have labour laws to protect them. The existing Human Rights laws are not enough to protect them. Dalits constitute the major bulk of landless labourers and daily wage earners in the unorganised sectors. Due to the impact of globalisation, there are mass migrations from the rural to the urban sector in search of livelihood. People are unable to continue their occupations such as labouring in the farming lands, and other skilled work,

⁵ A.P. Nirmal, "A Dialogue with Dalit Literature," in *Towards a Common Dalit Theology* (Madras: UELCI), p. 66.

⁶ *World Development Report*, 2003.

which have become obsolete on account of withdrawal/cuts in subsidies. Also, modern technologies have made their traditional way of farming impossible due to adopting new unsustainable methods, or because their traditional skilled work has been swept over by ever increasing competition.

a. Dalits as victims of land grabbing: Historically, Dalits have experienced alienation from their land because of rich landlord land grabs. The globalisation of agriculture and the privatisation of production have hit them hard. Out of the 5000 odd small farmers who committed suicide in different parts of the country during the last decade, more than 70% are Dalits. They were unable to repay their loans, and payed big amounts to buy seeds and fertilisers, which they never used as they preserved their own seeds year after year. Due to the impact of globalisation, they lost their lands, unable to continue farming with subsidies being cut or totally withdrawn, their own seeds having been lost, and added to that the huge cost of electricity, which forced them to abandon their occupation. The textile industries were affected and the cotton farmers especially from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu suffered. Farmers in other parts of India who went for quick cash, switched over from their agriculture of crops, like rice, in option for cash crops, rubber plantations, or prawn culture. This made their land uncultivable for rice or food grains. This situation has resulted in food insecurity, as well as also making them jobless, as they could not continue with the price crash of cash crops. Kerala was also a victim to this kind of impact. When the cotton farmers left their occupation, the textile industry suffered, and many were forced to close down on account of cheap clothes coming from outside, due in part to liberalisation. Once again, this made the cotton farmers stop their production as they no longer had access to any markets. One affected the other, and vice versa, making the life of farmers miserable and putting their families at stake. Many committed suicide and others were forced to migrate into urban areas looking out for alternate jobs. Migration makes people unskilled. Therefore, when they enter urban areas in search of jobs, the main jobs that they can find are in the unorganised sectors starting at the bottom, such as in construction work and digging. When the textile industries closed many of the workers were made jobless in the urban areas, and many weavers in the rural areas suffered due to the impact of halted cotton farming. A majority of people victimised by

this situation were Dalits.

b. Dalits as victims of development: Dalits have become the major victims of development plans of the government, which builds hundreds of dams. The building of dams has forcefully alienated the Dalits from their lands and put them in remote unfertile dry lands where they can neither find jobs, nor do their farming, nor send their children to schools. In the name of development, thousands of Dalits and Tribals have been displaced, rendering them totally deskilled, and alienated from their occupations and skilled works.

ii. Dalits as “slum-dwellers” in the cities facing health hazards:

The movement of people from rural to urban areas in search of a better livelihood pushes them into “slums” with minimum or no basic amenities, and exposing them to hygiene problems and health hazards (apart from those they face in the workplace). This movement of people from the rural to urban areas increases the “slum” populations in the cities to 70%. The truth is that the cities do not want to give a better life to these people and at the same time they cannot survive without the services of Dalit peoples.

iii. Dalit women’s role as breadwinner and child rearer:

Dalit women never have the luxury of being “housewives.” As landless labourers, they work from early in the morning until evening in the fields of upper-caste landlords. Women’s bodies being the battlefield for all social issues, caste has no exception. But Dalit women always face the threat of rape by landlords, and their bodies are raped and dealt with brutally during any/all caste conflicts. Even when they do equal work, they are paid less, and use their income to provide at least one basic meal for the family, which is poor and unbalanced most of the time. After work in the fields, which they do while keeping their babies under the trees and bushes, they go home only after fetching fire wood and provisions. They need to go a long way to fetch water for the family when it is not available nearby, or if they do not have access to it even if the wells are full – as they are the *untouchables*. They must cook food, feed their children, and only then can they relax. On the other hand, men are usually free soon after work in the fields, to take a stroll, smoke, and play with friends and neighbours, or get drunk and trouble the family members.

iv. Dalit women's struggle due to lack of health care and facilities:

With less access to proper medical care, as well as ignorance and traditional pressures, women's bodies are tortured with successive pregnancies and childbirths within the context of absolute poverty, and scarce medical facilities. Their bodies are experimented on as guinea pigs and manipulated by new family planning methods and techniques without proper information and permission. Due to starvation, dietary imbalance, and lack of food, which are the perpetual realities for Dalit women and girl-children, a majority of them are anaemic. This becomes intensified during pregnancy and childbirth, which leads to higher mortality rates among Dalit women. For every population of 5000, one auxiliary nurse/midwife (ANM) is provided. Very few home births are attended by these nurses. Institutional deliveries account for only 22% of the total deliveries – covering 55% of the urban areas and 18% of the rural ones.⁷ The contraceptives with greater side effects such as quinacrine, Net en, Norplant, Depo-provera, anti-fertility vaccines, and RU 486⁸ are indiscriminately administered to them causing menstrual disturbances, which often results in longer and frequent menstrual bleeding. This increases their anaemic condition, as well as keeps them away from social and religious functions. Moreover, they must contend with other ailments and disorders affecting their bodies with a greater risk of cancer and no access to a proper medical care. Due to the severe anaemic condition that is prevalent among Dalit women and young girls, many of them suffer from menstrual-related problems, which more often than not results in prolonged and excessive bleeding. This in turn worsens their anaemia.

v. Dalit women as the victims of violence:

Dalit women bear the brunt of violence both within families and their communities, but also outside their communities, from landlords, and from the hierarchical caste structure. They are the ones to be first paraded naked, raped or murdered in any inter-caste clashes whether it

involves them or not. They are the ones who face the reality of dowry deaths, domestic violence, and the deaths due to lack of medical care and facilities. They are the ones who are perpetually malnourished and starved becoming acutely anaemic, and therefore risking their lives in childbirth; thus worsening their health further by feeding the infants when they themselves are not healthy. They are the last ones to be hired for work, they are paid less, and retrenched or fired first. In the organised and unorganised sectors they are the ones to be thrown out of their jobs, and the ones who will be easily blamed and beaten up even if they are innocent of any petty theft or crime.

VII. Dalit girl-children and their agony:

Dalit girl-children are the most victimised in Indian society. These children lose their childhood at the tender age of five or even before that. They are the victims of child labour, bonded labour, and child prostitution. They are an unwanted lot considered as a liability to the family.

a. Dalit girl-children in prostitution: Prostitution in many cases takes place in the name of God and under traditional religious sanction. Due to STDs and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, more and more young girls are being pushed into prostitution as the customers prefer them to the older girls/women. Some practices within the Devadasi system, which is concentrated in the Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra border belt, as well as some Mathamma practices in Tamil Nadu in the southern part of India, have dedicated young girls from a very early age into a forced and religiously sanctioned prostitution, ruining the lives of many young girl-children. They are dedicated to Gods and Goddesses in order to fulfil promises made to the deity for favours related to the health of individual or family members. Or the family gives in to declarations made during religious celebrations that the particular Deity wants a specific girl to be dedicated. These are manipulations that fulfil the lust of the upper-caste landlords who are bent on having these young girls at an age of 12-16. The young girls are later sent to urban areas to be commercial sex-workers. This situation increases their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in a country which has unofficially crossed 1% of the total population of 1033.4 million.

⁷ Dr. Vibhuti Patel, "Impact of Economic Globalisation on Women," in *VIKALP Alternatives*. Volume XI. No.1, 2003 (Vikas Adhyayan Kendra, Mumbai) p. 136.

⁸ Ibid. p. 137.

b. Dalit girl-children devoid of educational and health facilities:

Dalit girl-children are the last ones to be sent to school and the first ones to be pulled-out if they are sent at all. The girl-children are often expected to play the mother's role of fetching water, collecting fire wood, cooking, and taking care of the younger siblings. If they go to school at all, they are often lured by the mid day meal, bringing it back home in many cases to feed their younger siblings. They are used for specific works in the fields such as weeding, transplanting, etc., and are paid very low wages or never paid. When it comes to feeding patterns or availing medical care within rural Dalit families, the girl-child will be the last one to be considered. The majority of Dalit children in the unorganised sectors work in hazardous conditions, such as fireworks factories, and small and big restaurants. Dalit girls often encounter sexual abuse in their work places. They are married off at a very young age and bear children very young, which also affects their health due to the reasons discussed above.

c. Violence against Dalit girl-children: The so-called upper-caste anti-women practices like the dowry, which can result in dowry-related deaths are creeping into Dalit cultures. Like the other communities which avoid the birth of the girl-child through selective processes like amniocentesis, chorion villai biopsy, sonography, ultrasound, imaging techniques, female foeticide, and infanticide, these are also on the rise within Dalit communities. It has resulted in the overall reduction in the Indian male/female ratio. The girl-children are wiped out either before birth or soon after birth where medical facilities are not prevalent. This problem is indeed more prevalent in the Sudra communities and upper-castes, but it is now increasing in the Dalit communities. Moreover, according to a world report, the Indian percentage of children under weight in the age group of 5 and below, during the years 1998-2000, is 46%. This definitely includes a bulk of Dalit children, especially the girls.

III A THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE FROM A DALIT PERSPECTIVE

In the light of the lived realities of the Dalits in India, especially in the rural areas where the caste discriminations and violence are very severe, making women and girl-children more vulnerable to circumstances both within and outside the community, the actions of Jesus healing the woman

with the haemorrhage and restoring the dead young girl to life are indeed models of liberation. This biblical story enable us to deconstruct age old androcentric theologies that exclude women and their experiences, in order to reconstruct them with women as the primary sources for doing theology. Until recently, Indian Christian theology has also been done from an upper-caste perspective, even though Dalits constituted nearly 25% of Indian society, and 70% of Indian Christians. Furthermore, Dalit theology, which is still being developed (and proclaims that it takes the entirety of human life into consideration), also needs to take into serious consideration the experiences of Dalit women for doing theology within the Indian context.

The discrimination against Dalits is based on their mixed blood, which is considered polluting to anything that it comes into contact with. The notion of the polluting nature of menstrual blood has crept in to Dalit communities from the so-called upper-caste beliefs. Thus, every single Dalit irrespective of gender, or age, is considered polluting, on account of her/his birth into this lineage with impure mixed blood. Also, the majority of the women with menstrual problems from menarche to menopause are considered to be polluting *within* and *outside* the community. These problems prevent them from leading a normal life, and participating in the religious rituals and social celebrations, as they tend to imitate the upper-caste models. In such a context the story of the woman being healed from a hemorrhage is very liberating.

In the light of the lived realities of the Dalit girl-children, especially from the rural areas, they are put to death by the enslaving and dehumanising practices both *within* and *outside* the communities; they live as though they are dead to the various opportunities in everyday life, which is taken for granted by children of other communities. The reality of being discarded, displaced and dispossessed makes them dead to real possibilities in life, which is the prerogative of all children born anywhere in this world. Therefore, "*Talitha Cum,*" meaning "little girl arise," is very meaningful and essential to the Dalit girl-child and the entire Dalit community. For them it means: "dehumanised community, arise"!

1. The miracle of the healing of the woman with a hemorrhage

This miracle reveals liberating insights that enable the Dalits to march forward and to experience liberation and fullness of life in a world that has marginalised them even further due to the impacts of globalisation. These realities exclude them from markets and marginalises them even more.

a. Similarities between the woman with the flow of blood and the Dalits:

- Within the 1st century context, this woman with the flow of blood has the potential of polluting every thing and every person she touches. Therefore, she is in this sense an *untouchable* and a Dalit. Here is one example of untouchability and pollution within the Indian caste system: if a Dalit touches the outside of a sealed bottle containing distilled water directly, the water inside gets polluted or becomes impure.
- According to the Jewish law, she is not supposed to appear in public places or gatherings to avoid polluting or making things and people impure by her touch. This is what is expected of Dalits as well; they are not allowed to enter in many the upper-caste spaces.
- The medical health facilities in her time and place were not sufficient to heal the hemorrhaging woman in spite of the money that she had to spend. She may have been a rich woman, but was discriminated and ostracised on account of the social and religious laws. It is similar for the Dalits in the Indian context. Even if a Dalit gets educated or becomes a rich person, Indian social and religious laws will not recognise the person as a human being. At the same time, if a Brahman is concerned, whether the person is rich or poor, even a beggar, well educated or not, the person has social status and dignity from birth to death.

b. Insights from the healing of the woman with the flow of blood:

- Nothing prevents a person from approaching, encountering or touching Jesus. No social, religious, or political laws can keep a person away from Jesus. No gender bias can keep a person away from Jesus. No enslaving tradition can stand victoriously when one is in contact or touch with Jesus. All these crumble down.
- Jesus accepts people from everywhere or anywhere and clothes them with dignity and honour. Jesus reinstates the identity of a person as a human being

created in the image of God. The church and society are called to do the same. The church exists to act on behalf of Jesus in carrying out all of what he did, so that God's reign of peace, justice and equality will be extended. The church and the Christians cannot be a hindrance to this, but rather promoters.

- Jesus not only accepts, but also *demand*s that all those around him, with him, or at his service, recognise and follow in his footsteps.
- Jesus' question, "Who touched me?" is a very relevant question within the caste and gender-stratified Indian church and society. He definitely would have known who touched him and what happened. Thus, Jesus grabs this occasion for a gender awareness session. In the Indian context, this story brings together not only gender awareness, but also the realities of dehumanisation, segregation, and oppression.
- Jesus justifies her action, and attributes the power of healing not to him, *but to her faith!* The person who is supposed to have polluted Jesus with her touch, after possibly polluting all those in the crowd whom she had to push and make her way through, is being acknowledged as one who could generate power to flow out of Jesus for healing.
- It is not just that the woman is healed from her flow of blood, but the crowd around Jesus gets healed of the rigid patriarchal mindset that keep women as *untouchables*. Jesus affirmed that her touch never polluted him. Rather her faith was great enough to cause a miracle, which affirms that Dalits in India are in no way inferior to anyone because of the families into which they are born, or the menial work which they are forced to do (in fact, all the work done by Dalits is cleansing, not polluting). This challenges the church in India to embrace and include Dalit Christians in the church's life and witness so that they are more visible in decision-making bodies. Jesus demands a conversion from his followers to respect all people irrespective of their colour, gender, class, caste, region, or religion, as created in the image of God.

2. The miracle of the young girl being restored to life

This miracle is hope and encouragement for Dalits to rise up from all that causes them to be crushed down. Even to this day, Jesus beckons all down-trodden people saying: life does not end here, get up, move, change the world,

and experience the fullness of life! Life cannot come to an end before it is even lived-out, or lived-out meaningfully. More than simply similarities to the Dalit experience, what we get from the Marken passage is whole lot of insights that make it a prerogative for every Christian to affirm that Jesus, who raised the little girl from death in order to experience life, demands that we as his followers support Dalit struggles for life and dignity in the Indian context, especially Dalit girl-children.

Insights from this miracle where the little girl is restored to life

- The girl in the biblical passage died at a young age due to certain illnesses. Dalits, in Indian society, are forced to die in many oppressive conditions that do not permit them to lead a dignified life. Even if they are alive, they are dead to the world, as they cannot have the privileges that other people have. Life without freedom, liberty, and dignity, is no life at all. Therefore, Jesus' action to raise the young girl who blossomed forth to lead a full life, applies to all oppressed communities in the world, and especially to Dalits, Tribals and women in the Indian context.
- Jesus' words to the girl, "*Talitha Cum*" or "little girl arise" is very apt, essential and relevant to girl-children in Indian society, and particularly to Dalit children who are malnourished, discriminated, denied of opportunities for proper education, health, and employment, by an oppressive society and the family too. "Little girl arise" must be pronounced right from the stage of conception so that Dalit children are saved from the snares of death due to female foeticide, infanticide, and child mortality, as well as the snares of death in the form of bonded labour, child labour, prostitution, and child abuse, etc. The church and the society are called to work hand-in-hand to wipe out these injustices against girl-children.
- As followers of Jesus, we are called again and again to work to restore life with individuals and communities who are living, but have no life. Restoring life with marginalised individuals, communities, and nations, is indeed what Jesus calls us to do.
- In an era of globalisation, where the weak and the poor are left behind, children, youth, women and the marginalized sections of the society are further marginalised. Students are also hit hard on account of education

being privatised, making it unreachable for many of average-class peoples, leave alone Dalits. Children are also being ignored when governments are busy with their big development plans at the cost of education and health. This miracle enables us to pause a while and think to what extent the church and society ignores children, who are the future of both. Proper planning in our programmes to include their well-being is essential, and an immediate need.

CONCLUSION

The process of globalisation and its impact on Dalits is far greater than what is outlined here. This is just the tip of the iceberg. One needs also to delve deep into the grassroots and work to promote justice. It is shameful for humankind to keep part of its body under slavery and dehumanisation. The miracles of Jesus are still life-giving when we, as his followers, pledge to do what he did while he was in this world. Jesus enables us and encourages us to counter all enslaving structures that deny and deprive life to God's people in any part of the world. The acts of healing and restoring life are very essential for transforming the Indian caste system, and the gender-stratified church and society. May the miracles of Jesus be models of liberation which take the Indian church and society forward, marching in the light of God. Death is inevitable, but one should live and die with dignity and honour. Jesus came into this world that all may have life and life in abundance.

CHOOSE LIFE

Globalisation began with the discovery
 By Columbus, & Ves Pucci in 15th Century.
 Industrial revolution of 16th Century
 Followed by Colonial conquests by north & west
 Imposing trade with economic interest
 Plundering resources in colonised places.
 The economic hegemony, and imperialism
 Over the rest of the world marked colonialism.

The struggle for independence
 In countries that were colonised
 Focused on Self rule and decision
 On social and economic needs
 Of their own population that feeds
 On the existing models of production,
 Accumulating and stabilising their capital
 With profit and market as guiding principle!

But alas, these poor countries in the world market
 Being the new entrants, faced only the threat
 Of losing their power and position
 To the great process of globalisation
 With profit and market driven forces
 From the hegemonic imperialists
 The option left was AID & TRADE
 With the same forces on a higher grade.

While AID came with conditions
 Affecting people of these nations
 Trade came with unfair rules
 That has become the strong tools
 To keep globalisation flourishing

And the rich nations nourishing
 Liberalisation and Privatisation' said government
 All in the name of our country's Development!

The consequences were heavy and numerous
 Soaring up of Petrol prices in 70's and 80's
 Lowering down of commodities' prices in the 90's.
 Trade slashed down steeply
 Bringing Structural Adjustment policy
 To face the debt crises!
 Poverty and unemployment deepened marginalisation,
 especially for Dalits, Tribals, and women.

Polarising rich and poor within and between every nation!
 Come, young and old, men, women and children
 To promote health, employment and education
 Raise your voice and act now for a better world
 That all people will have security, shelter and food
 Let's say NO to war, military, terrorism and Death
 And say Yes to LIFE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR LIFE
 For no part of the world can boast of security or health
 Until all parts of the world experience fullness of Life