

Women in Focus Evangelism

Prayer Points

1. Media ministries development and education in India.
2. Sneha's Father (one of our ministry workers). Her Father's healing of Kidney Failure. His name is Pradeep.
3. Wedding plans on June 3rd, 2006 to Greg Novini.

Terri Brelsford
Missionary to India

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Brelsford Brief

Terri L. Brelsford, Missionary to India, Account #2280907

Issue 19

May 2006

Diary of an Indian Mother



2004

February 19: Today has been the best day of my life. I am pregnant. When I wouldn't conceive the first 7 months after my marriage, it was pure agony. People had begun to wonder aloud if I was cursed. Well, at least now the gossip would stop and I can look them straight in the eye. My in-laws are so excited. Mahesh is thrilled about becoming a father. There's no doubt that this is the best day of my life.

February 27: It's so nice to be the center of such attention and care. Wish I could be pregnant all the time. But just this afternoon, a horrifying thought crossed my mind. What if it's a baby girl? Dear gods, please don't let that happen to me. I must remember to perform pujas and pray to the gods to let this be a baby boy. My in-laws and husband have always wanted a boy. I don't want a baby girl.

March 21: It's over a month and my stomach's beginning to show. But I am still distressed and worried about this being a baby girl. The more I try to shut the thought out, the more it keeps coming back. My mind goes back to my childhood - the taunts, the insults, and the trauma my mother had to face for giving birth to a girl. The agony didn't stop until the day my parents finally got me married. I had sworn then that I would never bring a girl child into this world. And now this anxiety is just tearing me apart. I think I am worrying too much. Maybe the gods will show me mercy, and it's going to be a boy, after all.

April 26: This misery of not knowing is beyond words. There's nothing to write.

May 2: I think my in-laws have been thinking about it too. Today they suggested I go in for a sex-determination test. Maybe I will.

May 12: My life's fallen apart. The test said it's a girl. I walked back into a quiet house today. My in-laws haven't spoken a word all day. Mahesh looks crestfallen. I am just too numb for words. Why, oh why, has this happened to me?

May 14: For two days, the silence screamed through the house. Today when the silence was finally broken, the torrent of insulting words hasn't stopped since. I'm trying to stop my tears but their words keep ringing in my ears. Why was I born a girl? Why didn't my mother just let me die? Then I wouldn't have had to go through this pain now. Will it ever end?

May 20: Now they say I must be cursed and unlucky to have conceived a girl baby. What can I do? It's my fate. Who can change it? I am so tired. I haven't slept in four days.

May 25: I am so scared to admit it, but I've been thinking of aborting this child. It seems like the only way out. I think my in-laws and husband would agree. They almost suggested it today. It's such a welcome option right now, a necessity almost.

May 26: Never. How could I even think of murdering my own baby? What sort of a woman am I? I think the gods would punish me if I did, and I'd never be able to bear a child again? Seeing the contempt on Mahesh's face is like a knife through my heart. my baby. Maybe I should just drink some poison and kill the two of us.

[Continued inside...]



Please see the Brelsford Website for more featured stories and video clips at:

www.terribrelsford.org

Passwords to enter:

Userid: saveindia
Password: WIFE
(Note: Words are case-sensitive)



Marilyn Jemimah Mohan
Pictured Above.

Merilyn is the daughter of Pastor David and Getzial Mohan, New Life AG in Chennai, INDIA.

A heritage of prayer, love and care has given Merilyn Jemimah Mohan, a heart that is compassionate towards the poor, the lost, the homeless especially children. This concern for the underprivileged was what birthed in her a determination to see that baby Esther abandoned by her parents, went only to a Christian home. Thanks to her the child is now enjoying a rich Christian heritage in a Christian home at New Life A/G in Chennai..

Brelsford Brief

Diary of an Indian Mother...(Contd.)

Article written by Sneha Pradeep, Terri Brelsford's Assistant

June 30: I have only tears left. My resolve to have this baby has just deepened the rift between Mahesh and me. I am grateful that he hasn't thrown me out of the house. I know it's cruel, but I wish the baby would be stillborn. But I know I'd fall to pieces if that were to happen, and I had to hold the little lifeless body in my arms.

July 17: Depression descends on me so easily nowadays, like a big, black cloud just waiting to swallow me up. Is there anything that can save me? Do the gods even care? They probably don't. I am, after all, just a woman.

September 24: The baby was born today. She came a month too early. As if that matters. It was deathly quiet when I returned home from the hospital. My in-laws didn't want to see the baby. Mahesh just looked at her. She's been crying all day. I've been crying too.

October 24: I couldn't take it any more, and so I did what I thought was best. Mahesh and I took the baby to a church near the city, and left her there with a note. I feel empty.



Picture of Baby Esther Above

Epilogue: Esther's Story

Merilyn Jemimah Mohan, daughter of Rev. D. Mohan and Mrs. Getzial Mohan, leaders of New Life AG relates the story of a girl baby left at the church.

October 24, 2001 We were in the middle of hosting the first-ever National Women's Conference at our church. The evening meetings were open to the public and the church was swarming with people. When the crowds began to disperse after the meeting that particular evening, an old lady approached some church members with a baby in her arms. She told us that a young couple had come to the church with the newborn baby. They had handed the baby over to her, requesting her to keep an eye on the baby for a few minutes. As it turned out, the old lady held the baby for a long time but the child's parents never returned.

As church members tried to pacify the hungry and distraught baby, a letter fell out from the baby's shirt.

Apparently tucked there by the parents, the letter said that they were leaving the baby at the church as they were not in a position to bring up the child.

After getting over the initial shock, we got a pacifier and a feeding bottle, and managed to make a small cradle in our Hope Center using a saree. Word had already spread through the church that a baby had been abandoned on the premises. We fed the baby and by the time she fell asleep, many people came forward and offered to adopt the baby, a beautiful female child who was possibly just a month old.

We finished the legal formalities of informing the police and considered sending the baby to a government-aided orphanage. We realized, however,

that growing in a nurturing Christian atmosphere would be far better for the child. We soon found an orphanage run by one of our church members. They readily agreed to take her into their home. As we watched the baby leave, tears welled up in our eyes.

She was with us for just a few hours, but she had a lot to teach us about the verse in Isaiah 49:15, "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you." Though her parents had abandoned her, the Lord had not forgotten her.

They named the baby Esther. She was dedicated to the Lord last year. She lives now not unlike the queen she has been named after.

Article Submitted by Merilyn Jemimah Mohan

June Wedding in Kansas City

Greg Novini and I have an appointment with God at the altar on June 3 at 3:00 pm at Northland Cathedral in Kansas City. Please pray God's bountiful anointing and blessings upon our wedding day and marriage. We are excited and anticipating His direction as we prepare to return to India as AGWM missionaries.

Lately you have been hearing a lot on the news about immigration. I had no idea how complicated the process to receive American citizenship is until we started the process for Greg. My sweetheart is Canadian and lives just ten minutes from Detroit in Windsor, Ontario. Windsor had always seemed only like a suburb of Detroit to us. However, once we contacted Homeland Security Offices in the USA, we discovered how complicated the immigration process for his citizenship would be. Fees are nearly \$1500 and there is quite a waiting period. So we have retained a lawyer to help us. Greg keeps reminding me that this is only paper to God.

We have received missionary appointment by AGWM for Missionary In Residence (MIR) at Central Bible College in Springfield, Missouri this next year. This appointment will give us the time to move through the immigration process. Please pray with us that we will have favor and that our immigration application will move speedily through governmental red tape in record time.

Our role as AGWM missionary ambassadors is crucial. CBC is one of our flagship Bible colleges preparing

young men and women for a life of missions service and instilling a burden for missions in the hearts of future pastors and leaders. Even though we will not be physically living in India this year, our missionary budget still supports many works in India. We support Southern Asia Bible College, Tamilnadu Bible College, Trinity Bible College for Women and Southern District Bible College. So we believe in the work of Bible colleges here in the USA and also on the other side of the world.

We still remain very active in the support and ministry in India. We continue to be an integral part of Women in Focus Evangelism through active ministry and budget support and leading teams to India to minister. The internet gives us opportunity for editing and writing articles for the magazine. Our Women in Focus staff, home and ministry are still fully operative on the other side of the world in India. We so appreciate your love, prayers, support and continued faithfulness as our Harvest Master prepares and leads us in the next steps of the journey! The Scripture says, "One can put a thousand to flight, but two can put ten thousand."



END NOTES

Although the 'Diary of an Indian mother' is a work of fiction, the story of the baby left on the doorstep of New Life AG, Chennai is true. What is also true is the trauma that many Indian mothers go through when they discover that they have conceived girl babies. Some women are forced to conceive again and again, until they succeed in having a baby boy. Baby Esther was at least spared to live, but there are many girl babies that are murdered either while they are still in their mothers' wombs or killed right after they are born. A study based on a survey of 1.1 million Indian homes has revealed that 500,000 female babies are lost annually to selective abortion. (For more details, see <http://www.hindu.com/2006/01/10/stories/2006011004311300.htm>). The decline of females in the female to male ratio is proof of rampant female infanticide.

Churches like New Life AG have opened their doors to shelter the girl child and abused women, and are involved in educating the community on the intrinsic worth that God places on the lives of every human being, regardless of gender. In a society whose sensibilities have been numbed, nothing except the gospel of grace of the Lord Jesus Christ can stop the mindless murders of innocent girl children. But who will speak up for them? Who will take this gospel of grace to them? It's you and I. Join us in prayerful support as we stand on behalf of the women of India.

ADDITIONAL LINKS FOR REVIEW

1. Suggested Links: Click here http://womeninministry.ag.org/0501/0501_interview_mohan.cfm for 'Interview with Mrs. Getzial Mohan'.
2. For a snippet from my life, 'Holiday Memories', see page 22 of the November/December 2004 issue of Woman's Touch magazine.



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