

SIMnow

EAST ASIA EDITION

DETERMINATION IN MISSION

*“For they all frighten us, thinking,
‘Their hands will drop from the work,
and it will not be done.’ But now,
O God, strengthen my hands.”*

Nehemiah 6:9



CONTENTS

3 EDITORIAL



Divine Strength and
Human Determination

Watson Rajaratnam,
Regional Director

4 BIBLE STUDY



Determination in Mission
(Nehemiah 6:9-16)

Rev Dr Vijendra Daniel,
Chairman, SIM West Malaysia Council

5 TESTIMONY



Determined to Serve:
Journey of Faith and Mission

Hannah,
Philippines

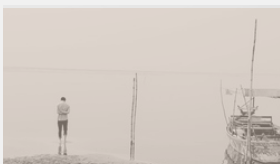
6 TESTIMONY



A Calling That Sustains

Nokdang and Among,
Thailand

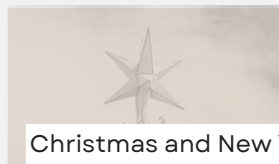
7 TESTIMONY



Rivers in the Desert
and Testifying for God

John and Ruth,
South Asia

8 SIM NEWS



Christmas and New Year Greetings

Watson Rajaratnam,
Regional Director

Regional Council Meeting
Dr Ng Khee Yang,
Deputy Regional Director

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SIM
EAST ASIA
Serving In Mission
国际事工差会

Divine Strength and Human Determination



Watson Rajaratnam,
Regional Director, SIM East Asia

It has been two thousand years since Jesus was born. Many are still living and dying without Christ in many parts of the world. The forces of darkness are working overtime. But I believe we are not even working part time. Now is the time for us to complete the unfinished task by seriously sending our labourers to the fields. We need firm determination on our part, total reliance on God and the right strategies to finish the task given by Jesus.

Nehemiah while talking about the challenges he encountered when he attempted to finish his God-given task of building the walls of Jerusalem, prayed: **“For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, ‘Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done.’ But now, O God, strengthen my hands”** (Nehemiah 6:9).

Nehemiah’s story is one of resilience, prayer, and unwavering faith in the face of fierce opposition. As he led the people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, enemies rose up with threats, discouragement, and schemes to stop the work. Yet Nehemiah’s response was not to surrender to fear, nor to rely solely on human strength. Instead, he turned to God with a simple but powerful prayer: **“O God, strengthen my hands.”**

This must be the cry of every servant of God engaged in His mission. The task of proclaiming the Gospel and building His Kingdom continues around the world today amidst challenges – political resistance, spiritual warfare, financial limitations, cultural barriers, and even personal discouragement. The enemy’s strategy remains the same: to frighten, to weaken, and to cause the hands of God’s servants to drop the work.

Yet, just like Nehemiah, we are not called to retreat but to look up to Him. Our strength is not found in ourselves but in the Lord who called us. The Apostle Paul reminds us: **“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain”** (1 Corinthians 15:58).

As we read this issue of SIM Now, may Nehemiah’s prayer echo in our hearts. When fear, doubt, or weariness threaten us, let’s pray with Nehemiah: **“O God, strengthen my hands.”** Let’s also declare with confidence in our God: **“I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down”** (Nehemiah 6: 3).

The work will be completed, not because of human might, but because of the power and strength of our Lord. Together, let us press on with renewed faith, knowing that the God who strengthens our hands will enable us to finish the unfinished task.

Determination in Mission



NEHEMIAH 6:9-16

Rev Dr Vijendra Daniel,
Chairman, SIM West Malaysia Council

Our grand theme for this year from Nehemiah is **“Remaining Focused on Our Mission”**. In April, we looked at “Distractions in Missions” (Nehemiah 6:2-3) and in August, **“Deep Reliance on God”** (Nehemiah 4:6-9). We now look at **“Determination in Mission”** in Nehemiah 6:9-16.

Nehemiah’s task (445 BC) was to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem previously destroyed by the Babylonians and Persians. This stone wall measured approximately 2.5 miles (4 kilometres) long and 10 - 12 feet (3 - 4 metres) high. It had ten gates and at least eight towers. This incredible feat was accomplished in 52 days despite the challenges and resistance Nehemiah faced. However, more than mere rocks or a wall, it was a symbol of recovery from ruin and of change and renewal. It promised hope and a glimpse of order restored.

God’s Mission and Determination

All of this was accomplished through the determination and fortitude of Nehemiah and his team. Despite the mocking, threats, false accusations, and fear-mongering of the “unholy quantity” (Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem and Shemaiah), Nehemiah remained focused and determined to finish the task God had entrusted to him. Nehemiah 6:9 (NIV) sums up his response to their evil intent: **“They all wanted to frighten us, thinking, ‘Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed.’ But I prayed, ‘Now strengthen my hands.’”**

God’s Mission and Dependence

This passage reminds us that God’s mission is never without its challenges. Distractions, fear, and fatigue often tempt us to abandon the work. Yet Nehemiah showed us the key to perseverance: prayer for strength and a refusal to be sidetracked. Nehemiah 6:16 (NIV) records the result: the wall was finished, and even his enemies **“realised that this work had been done with the help of our God”**.

SIM has lived this lesson for more than 130 years. Since its founding in 1893, it has faced enormous challenges in bringing the Gospel to the nations. Ours is a simple motto: **“By prayer.”** When missionaries encounter barriers – whether political opposition, language difficulty or personal weakness – we first turn to prayer, trusting God to open doors. Like Nehemiah, we must plead for God to **“strengthen our hands”**. Nehemiah’s determination flowed not from his own strength or self-confidence. It came from a strong conviction that God had called him to this task and a deep dependence on the God who had called him.

We saw this same determination in three young men (Roland Bingham, Thomas Kent, and Walter Gowans) who set out for Sudan in 1893 with a vision to reach the unreached. Despite facing intense discouragement through losing two of them to malaria, Bingham pressed on in faith and determination. SIM International was birthed through his prayer, conviction, determination and dependence on God, continuing today in over 90 countries.

The lesson from Nehemiah and SIM’s story is clear:

Obstacles are real, but with prayer and determination, God’s mission is unstoppable.

Determined to Serve: Journey of Faith and Mission

Hannah,
Philippines

I'm Hannah, the youngest in my family and the first to follow Christ. My journey began with a deep longing to know God intimately, which led me to a seminary. There, I met my husband, and together we dreamed of serving the Lord. We were blessed with a beautiful child.

In 2001, God called us to pioneer a home fellowship and launch a community development initiative in a South Asian Country. Our vision was to provide quality education to disadvantaged children and vocational training to marginalised women.

As the ministry grew, my husband became critically ill and required a liver transplant. We sold our property, raised funds and sought treatment in a neighbouring country, but the treatment failed to materialise and he went home to the Lord in 2007.

I was overwhelmed with grief. Broken and unsure, I returned home with our five-year-old child. I fasted and cried out to God in despair. He answered through Joshua 1:6-9 (NIV): **"Be strong and courageous...for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."** In faith and with the funds intended for my husband's operation, I returned with determination to the South Asian Country to build a school which was his final wish.

Insurmountable Challenges and God's Faithfulness

The task felt insurmountable in the beginning as I was a widow lacking construction experience in a male-dominated society. Yet God was faithful – Father to the fatherless, Defender of widows. The school was completed in a year and became a refuge of hope.



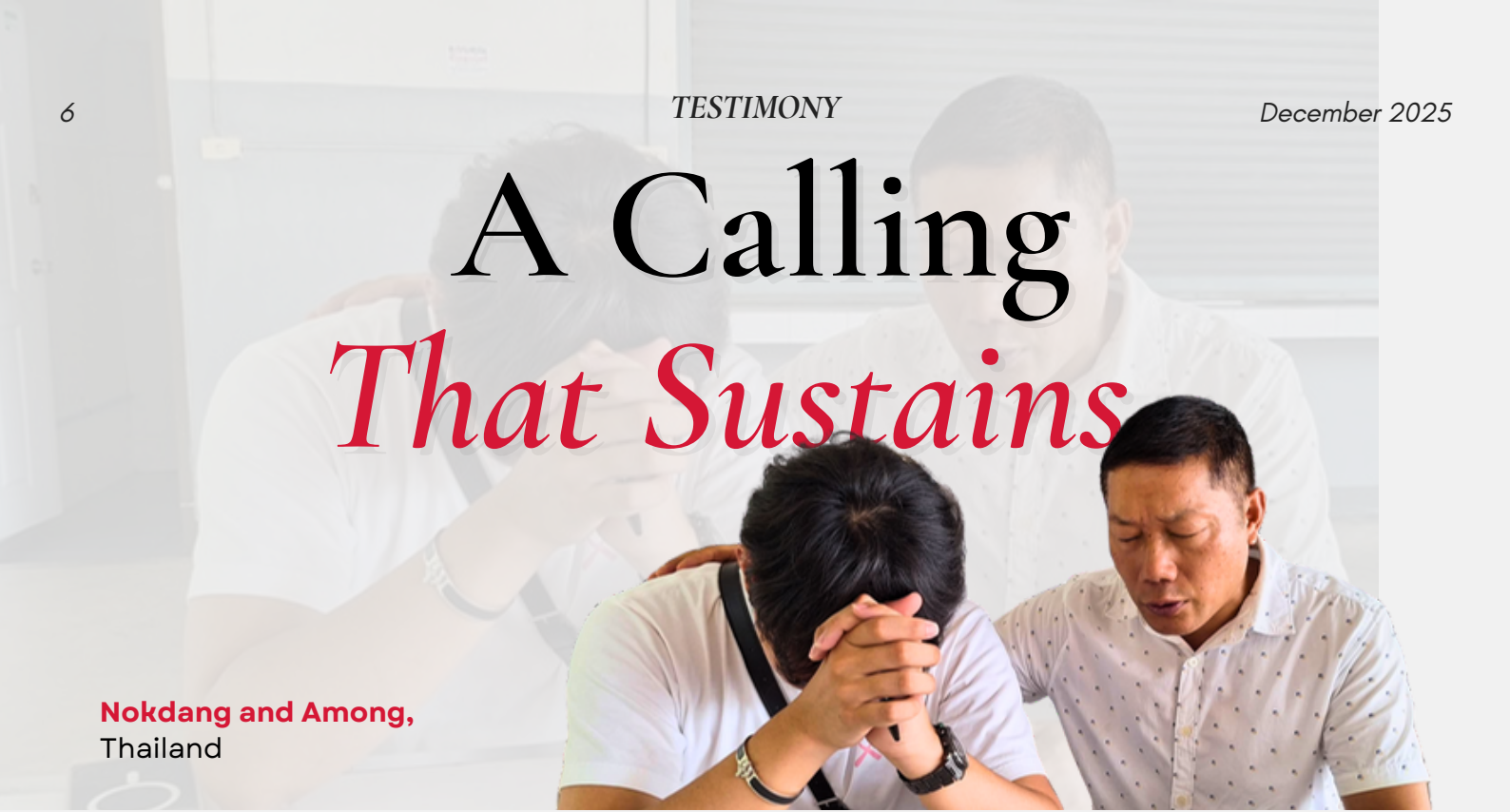
Two decades later, the ministry continues to flourish. We offer affordable education, scholarships to children in need, and empower women through skills-equipping. Hundreds of students have graduated and now support their families with dignity.

One such transformed life is *Irum, a prior scholarship recipient and now believer who serves in a local church and works with us to give back to the community that gave her hope.

Unassailable Challenges and God's Strength

What keeps me going under such challenges? It's the love of Christ and a firm determination to serve Him. His redemptive mission compels me to share His love with those still awaiting a Saviour. I've seen how God strengthens the weak and uplifts the brokenhearted – just as He did with me. I hold on to the truth of Philippians 4:13 (NIV): **"I can do all things through Him who give me strength."** In my darkest moments, He was my light. In my weakness, He became my strength. By His grace and the support of family and friends, I was able to rise above grief, cultural barriers, and personal limitations.

I never imagined that my story would inspire others and government leaders who now partner with us to serve their people. But God in His mercy has turned mourning into dancing, and made me a vessel of transformation. If He can use a grieving widow with limited capability, He can use anyone. Therefore, to every servant of God facing impossible odds my encouragement is: **"Press on."** The mission is hard, but the reward is eternal. Let Christ be your strength, your vision, and your victory. All glory to Him!



A Calling *That Sustains*

Nokdang and Among,
Thailand

For the past 27 years, we have walked a path marked by both calling and resistance. At times, opposition comes from unexpected voices in various forms. Financial scarcity often looms, and moments of doubt, discouragement, and even betrayal have been real. Yet the Lord has consistently reminded us to pray for strength rather than give in to despair. Thus, we have remained firm in our calling, not because the journey has been easy, but because His grace has been sufficient and our burden to reach the next generation has been ever increasing.

Serving with resilience amidst challenges

With less than 0.2% professing faith in Christ, Isaan remains one of the slowest-growing regions in terms of gospel penetration. Khon Kaen is the gateway to Isaan and an education hub. Here we are reaching university students and young professionals, those who represent the intellectual and social future of Thailand. The university sphere is a fertile ground that offers a unique opportunity to plant the seeds of the gospel in the lives of young people who will shape the future of the society, and this truth remains stronger than the voices telling us to give up. These young minds are open to meaningful dialogues, curious about faith, and positioned to shape culture for generations to come. Their potential is too great, their needs are too urgent, and the Gospel too powerful to walk away. So, we pray, as Nehemiah did, “**Now strengthen our hands.**” And in that prayer, we find the resilience to keep going.

Striving with determination to transform lives

We are burdened to advance the Gospel with urgency among unreached and least-engaged communities and to see Thai intellectuals and interfaith knowledge diasporas transformed by encountering Jesus Christ and becoming witnesses. Moss’s story is a powerful testimony to the long-term impact of university ministry and the transformative power of the Gospel. We first met Moss during his undergraduate studies in Mechanical Engineering. Throughout his academic journey, we walked alongside him, mentoring, praying, and sharing the love of Christ. It was during the third year of his master’s degree that Moss decided to follow Jesus. That moment marked not just a personal transformation but the beginning of a greater purpose unfolding in his life.

Today, Moss is the CEO of his own educational company, connecting with hundreds and thousands of students preparing for careers in medicine, engineering, pharmacy, and other fields across the nation. Through his role as an educator and leader, we believe that his personal encounter with Jesus will be contagious through his voice and profession and ripple through various sectors of the nation.

Rivers in the Desert and Testifying for God



John and Ruth,
South Asia

He is a great God – from everlasting to everlasting.

This has been our deepest realisation in recent days. With His mighty hand, He made a way where there was none, and led us as a couple through five years of preparation before bringing us safely to the field. Through this journey, we experienced His faithfulness, power, and goodness.

From a damaged passport in 2020, to acquiring a replacement in 2023; from being perplexed in 2021 about the identity we would carry into the field to receiving in 2025 the first student visa issued by the country's embassy in five years. This journey enabled us to understand that no matter status or place, all glory belongs to God!

God's Delay and His Moulding

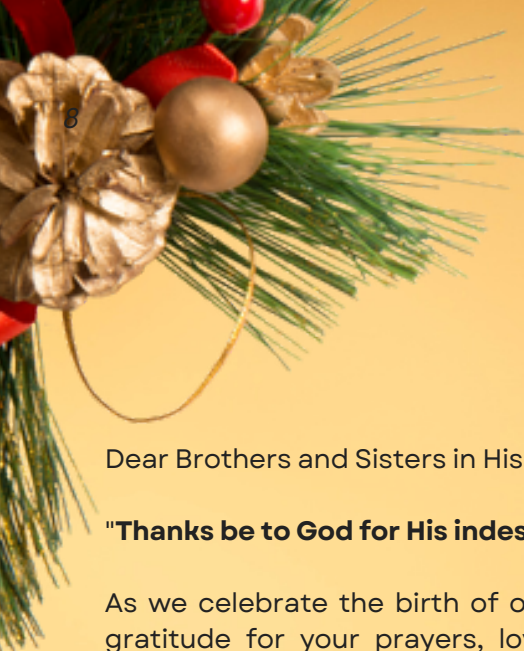
God's timing is perfect. Though we thought He tarried, He was actually moulding and shaping us at that time, constantly illuminating our dark moments, and teaching us to lean on the great Creator in our weakness.

In the past, we were self-reliant, unable to partner with others, and had a small view of God. However, this experience caused us to see that it is God who desires to do great things, and He is able to establish His Kingdom amongst a vast population where believers are few. This incredible feat is definitely not possible by one's own strength.

God's Calling and Our Determination

By His grace, we have arrived at the field – not because we were fully prepared, but because we received this calling by faith and we were determined to obey this call. He who began this work will surely help us to continue and bring it to completion before the second coming of our Lord Jesus.





Blessed Christmas & Christ-centered New Year

Dear Brothers and Sisters in His Mission,

"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV)

As we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ and step into a new year, our hearts are full of gratitude for your prayers, love, and generous partnership in God's mission. Truly, your faithful support has been a living testimony of Christ's love and an encouragement to us in the work of the Gospel. We count it a privilege to serve Christ together with you.

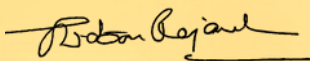
Christmas reminds us that God's greatest gift came in the form of His Son, sent to bring light into a dark world. And because of that gift, we press on in hope, joy, and obedience to His calling. Your partnership has helped us to share this Good News with many around the world.

As we look forward to the year ahead, we echo the prayer of the Apostle Paul: **"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit"** (Romans 15:13, NIV).

May the joy of Christmas fill your hearts, and may the New Year bring renewed strength, fruitfulness, and deeper experiences of God's grace!

With love and gratitude in the name of the Lord of the Harvest,

Your brother in His service,



Watson Rajaratnam,
Regional Director, SIM East Asia

SIM EAST ASIA REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

2025

Dr Ng Khee Yang,
Deputy Regional Director, SIM East Asia

Our 34th SIM East Asia Regional Council Meeting was held from 19 to 22 November 2025 at the Armada Hotel Manila, Philippines. Around forty delegates from 11 SIM EA entities attended the three-day event. Each entity was represented by the Entity's Board/Council Chairman and Director. The keynote address on the first day was delivered by Dr Howie Brant, former Deputy International Director. He introduced SIM East Asia's theme for 2026, **"Abiding in Christ, Being Fruitful and Glorifying God."** Missionary representatives Anglem and Tingba shared the Word on the second day, and International Director Phil Bauman shared the Word on the last day. On the second day and third day, Entity directors presented reports for discussions, questions, and answers. The programme was also packed with designated times for personal Quiet Time, corporate Prayer Time, and Fellowship Time. It was truly a blessed time of fellowship, encouragement and spurring one another towards greater service for the Lord in His Mission! Praise be to God!