

## **Edited Transcript of the Wake Service for Vashan Govindavelu**

### **Speaker 1: Pastor Tony**

#### **Introduction: The House of Mourning**

As you remain standing just for a moment, let us honour God's word. I would like to read from the book of Ecclesiastes, written by a very wise man in scripture, Solomon. It says, "It is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting. For that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart".

No doubt there are many friends and family here from different backgrounds, beliefs, and religions. I am called to say a few words on behalf of their pastor and church, and to represent what the Christian faith believes about the death of a loved one. I hope you will not take offense, as our intention here is simply to be a blessing. **Regardless of your faith or nationality, every single house you see—no matter how prosperous or happy—will one day become a house of mourning.** Death knows no respect; it respects no age, faith, or religion, visiting the poor house all the way up to the White House. It is an event that leaves us feeling empty and powerless, but for the Christian, it is a testimony that our earthly suffering will one day have an end.

**The Pressures of Modern Life** While the house of feasting offers temporary distractions from our mental and emotional stresses, at the end of the day, those problems are still there. In the age we now live in, we see our children placed under immense stress, demanded by society to strive for the best education and the best jobs. **Man-made pressures dictate that you must wear the best clothes, live in a certain community, and look a certain way; if you do not measure up, society tells you that you are a failure.**

This toxic thinking is propagated by Hollywood and the internet, placing young people under such emotional and mental torment that they feel they are not good enough the way God made them. We were not made to live in such conditions. Think of Adam in the Garden of Eden: he didn't have to worry about rent, where his next meal would come from, or putting locks on his doors. Today, people try to find a cure for this pressure in alcohol, drugs, or sports, triggering dopamine to make themselves believe they are having an exciting life, but these are merely distractions.

**Embracing the Seasons of Life** You must live your life in the seasons that God gives you. When you are a teenager, you don't have to worry about rent, groceries, or safety. Enjoy that season and ride it as long as you can, because when you step out into adulthood, the responsibilities will come, and you will look back wishing you hadn't rushed it.

Life is a gift from God, and by giving you life, He gives you time. **Any time you do not see time and life as a gift, you waste it.** Do not waste your time fussing with your spouse over small things, holding grudges, or turning every little issue into a massive alarm fire. Enjoy your time lest you have regrets. For us Christians, we must remember that our children's days are numbered from the moment they are born; we must cherish every moment and love them the best we can, even when they make choices we do not approve of. You cannot protect them from suffering or from themselves, but you can be there for them.

**Understanding Death as a Divine Appointment** Visiting the house of mourning forces us to confront the reality that life is short, and death becomes our ultimate teacher. Is death truly a curse? When God told Adam he would surely die, He knew that sin would corrupt our bodies and minds. **If there were no death, people would be forced to live eternally in decaying bodies, suffering in hospital beds; in this light, death can actually be a profound blessing.**

Psalms 90:12 says, "Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom". It is appointed unto men once to die, and you cannot hide from this appointment. As the ancient parable of the Merchant of Baghdad illustrates, death is an inescapable appointment that we must all face. We are born without consent, we grow old without consent, and we die without consent.

**God's Absolute Sovereignty Over Life and Death** Life is not an accident. A child is born because their name is in the Book of Life and God determined they must visit this earth. Varshan never brought himself here; he was chosen by God, guided by God, and needed here for a divine purpose. **If life is not an accident, then how can death be an accident?**

God is in control at all times, meaning the length of our days is determined solely by Him. Satan is not in charge of death. If Satan were in charge, he would have killed us all already. As we see in the story of Job, Satan only has the power to act as God explicitly permits.

**Life and death are entirely in the hands of the Creator; no one leaves this earth unless God permits it.** As Job said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord".

**Reflections on Varshan and the Grace of Calvary** Let me share a conversation I had with this young man just last Good Friday. He told me he had a "dark past". I pointed him to Calvary, explaining that Christ did not come for the good; He came for the sinner. I told him that **every time the devil tries to make you ashamed of your past or guilty of your weaknesses, your first thought should be to thank God for Calvary, because grace covers what you did, what you are doing, and what you might do.**

I advised him that living a good life isn't about perfectly following rules, but about finding a godly wife and living as a good example for his family. He proudly pointed to Claudia, showing me he had a pretty one. He was a man moving forward, and what that conversation told me is that he was in a very good place spiritually.

You do not know the mental and emotional pressures the enemy places on someone trying to move in the right direction, and not everyone is equipped to handle those pressures. God simply saw his struggles and said, "Son, you're in a good place. It's time for you to come home". **For Varshan, there is no more suffering, no more shame, no more mental torture, and no more striving; he is secure.**

### **Conclusion and Final Comfort**

The Apostle Paul tells us to give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will. While we weep because we will miss him, God had a deliberate purpose for placing Varshan in our time and giving him to us for a short season. Our tears and grief prove that he was well-loved, and the evidence that his life brought value is seen in our gathering here today.

The scriptures teach us that we will meet again where there will never be a parting. Until then, we must take comfort that the God who brought him here had a merciful reason for calling him home. I pray that the Lord gives strength and comfort to this family, to his mother, and to his friends in a way that only He can. In Jesus' name, Amen.