

Hebron Messenger

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DECEMBER 2, 2001

NO.24

TIME IS AT HAND – 3

That we are at the very doorstep of the Return of Christ is a fact that no serious Bible student would deny. "Can ye not discern the signs of the times?" is the mild rebuke that Christ gave to His disciples in Matt. 16:3. The regathering of Israel in giving them the status of an independent nation in the world map on May 14, 1948 has set the ball rolling. Earthquakes and famines, floods and droughts, escalation of crime the world over, point to the immediacy and imminence of His coming.

The next event in God's calendar is the Return of Christ. To be prepared for anything else than this is the height of blindness and suicidal madness. There are around 1500 predictions about the Second Coming of Christ than the first advent of which the Old Testament prophets prophesied in about 500 places. Needless to state, the Holy Writ places a threefold emphasis on His second Coming than on the first. The events linked to His glorious return before and after are recorded for us in stunning detail in the last book of the Bible, The Revelation.

Surprisingly the most neglected book in the New Testament happens to be the book of Revelation. Somebody defined the word 'classic' thus: A classic is a book which everyone wishes to have read but no one wants to read. The book of Revelation shares just that destiny. It is understandable for an unregenerate spiritually unenlightened Christian to neglect this book. For him this is a book filled with frightening happenings, fairy-tale like stories too strange to believe. Unfortunately the confessed believer shares no different conviction. He admires the book from a distance but dreads to assimilate its contents. Why so?

While Satan, the arch-enemy of our souls hates and opposes all books in the Bible his fury seems to be hotter against two books –Genesis and Revelation. The first question raised by Satan in the Bible is "hath God said... ?" (Gen.3:1). He successfully sowed suspicion into the mind of Eve and brought her into believing his lie. He has ever since then been attacking God's Word. In Genesis we read his entry, his strategy and immediate success. Satan is no make believe fairy –tale figure but a real potentate whom we have to confront. To underestimate his power and success is to sell ourselves into his grip. He is real and powerful. Going by statistics he has been highly successful.

God created Adam and Eve to bring glory to Himself. Through subtlety and deception Satan corrupted them. God promised that He would crush the head of Satan through the 'seed' of the woman. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). The warfare began with God. Notice carefully in Biblical history the hand of the enemy in preventing that seed from coming and eventually challenging His supremacy.

After corrupting Adam and Eve he went on to create enmity between Cain and Abel. Abel was murdered. What meets the eye is the jealousy of Cain but there is more to it. Instead of Abel God gave Seth. As early as chapter six of Genesis we find moral impurity everywhere. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen.6:5). God had to destroy that generation through a deluge but preserved a Noah to bring forth "the woman's seed". God made anew beginning with Noah. Enemy found an entry through Ham. God superseded the evil one by electing Abraham. He promised to give a seed (Gen.13:15). Abraham and Sarah hatched out another plan to help God. Through Hagar the Egyptian slave, Abraham fathered an Ishmael and Abraham was content to adopt this boy as the promised seed. How the enemy should have rejoiced! God intervened and at the right time brought an Isaac. Esau and Jacob were born to Isaac and Rebecca. The rivalry between the brothers aided by the favoritism of parents reached the climax when Esau vowed to slay his brother Jacob (Gen.27:41). God allowed Jacob to flee to, Haran, preserved him through the waste howling wilderness and reached him safe to Haran, Both God and Satan were interested in Jacob; the Almighty One to produce "the woman's seed" and the other to prevent that seed. God preserved Jacob from Laban and later from Esau and gave him twelve sons. The enemy brought a famine to destroy the whole family with

hunger but God had already sent Joseph to Egypt to become the bread-giver. God preserved the race. After the death of Joseph, Pharaoh afflicted them. He sent a royal decree to slay all male Hebrew children. God prepared a leader in Moses and brought the Hebrew nation out of Egypt. He preserved them through the wilderness and gave them the promised land. Apostasy, idolatry led the people of God into bondage and dispersion. God gave them a David but when his descendants failed He made them forfeit the land. BUT God never forgot His promise. "The woman's seed", "the virgin's seed"(Isa.7:14) came at last when the New Testament opens before us. Herod ordered all children killed, two years old and under (Matt.2:16). God preserved His Son. Later at Nazareth they sought to "cast him down headlong" (Luke 4:29) but "The seed" was preserved again. The enemy thought to have finished Him when he nailed Jesus to a Roman cross but God allowed the cross to "spoil principalities and powers" (Col.2:15). After the Lord's ascension, the Church, "the promised seed", (Psa.22:30) came into existence. With all its shortcomings, the Church is destined for the throne. The climax of the conflict is explained in Revelation when God will finally overthrow the rule of Satan. Satan, the false prophet and the beast would be cast into the lake of fire (Rev.20:10). What a revelation! Hence the enemy would not allow anyone to read his end. In Genesis we see his entry and in Revelation his exit.

My friend, on whose side are you? Hell was never prepared by a loving God for any human being. It was designed for Devil and his angels (Matt.25:41). A man by refusing to repent, trust Christ and follow Him chooses to follow the Devil. Christ is coming for His own. Are you His? Are you in the fold of Christ? What, if Christ comes today?

(To be contd.)

P.S.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

Beer-sheba Christian Society
Behrampura
Ahmedabad--380 022,
India

13-11-2001

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious and prevailing Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "Head over all things in His Church", "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge". Through His Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, He may enlighten our understanding to know His person, His purpose, and His possession and be established in it by exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward. Thus we may effectively contribute to the edification of the Church the Body of Christ, according to the measure of the gift of Christ (Eph.1 :18-23; Col.2:3,10; Eph.4:1-7).

Let us thank the Lord for the many special meetings, Gospel Campaigns, besides sisters' gatherings held in many assemblies affiliated to us from October 22 to that weekend, the Lord providing for all spiritual and temporal needs. Saints and brethren with God's servant Bro.Manoah Augustine of Horeb Prayer House, Eluru would have us to thank and praise the Lord, for enabling them to reach more than fifty villages around Eluru town. Nearly eighty believers participated in the ministry after several months of prayer. The word of the Lord had free course, without hindrance or opposition. May the Lord, we pray, accomplish His word released in all the above ministries and many more according to Isa. 55:11.

We would like to continue our thoughts from the book of Daniel, chapter 2, for further practical lessons that can benefit us, in pursuance of our heavenly calling for the Kingdom of Christ. The second chapter enlarges on the subject of perception of the will of God, for spiritual intelligence is necessary for those who would reign with Christ. The man of God has to discern the two essential kingdoms- the kingdom of the world (and therefore of Satan) and the Kingdom of God's dear Son (Col.1:13).

In the spiritual realm and in connection with the worship and service of God, what is the significance of the contrast between the image of human glory and the "stone...cut out without hands"(v.34)? What is the kingdom that we are to. beware of -the kingdom universally admired (or feared), but doomed to utter destruction? Arm what is the true

Kingdom undefined by man, but shaped in the secret by God, to be revealed from heaven and to inherit all things? Like Daniel, we need to know. This knowledge is a matter of life and death.

Clearly this was a matter which required help from God. It was prayer, not study nor discussion, which gave the revelation. Daniel made this matter known to his companions, to desire the mercies of God concerning this secret. Then was the secret made known unto or revealed unto Daniel in a night vision (Daniel 2: 11-13). Here is a divine principle of the value of prayer in agreement with others -based on Matt.18:19 and other Scriptures. Revelation is given to one -Daniel, but the joint prayer of his companions with him, although Daniel alone became the spokesman before the king.

Much emphasis is devoted to this point; so Much so, the Lord is called the "revealer of secrets" (v.47). Since then there was no merely rational distinction, which all could perceive, but a difference revealed by the Spirit in answer to prayer. We are in search of an inward discrimination, rather than casual outward observation. What it amounts to is this: that the true Kingdom is not a human institution, but a spiritual experience. The Church (in which the New Testament uses the term) is not an earthly institution, but a heavenly organism. Something of this heavenly organism can somehow be found within an institution, and conversely, any group gathered on a spiritual basis can alas, easily degenerate into another earthly institution. The Kingdom is primarily a nature, a spiritual experience. It is not just a case of being "in" this heavenly Kingdom, but also of having the Kingdom "in" us.

This would make us deeply dependant on the Holy Spirit, if we are to be saved from that other kingdom -the kingdom of man's glory, of earthly values and human arrangement, and if we are to be conformed to the Christ -like character of the Kingdom of heaven. The discrimination is much more than theoretical. It is of supreme importance. It may decide our usefulness to God in eternal ages, and it will call for constant obedience everyday in practical concerns. God helping, we shall consider the lesson of chapter 3, later on.

The All India Holy Convocation being held at' Beersheba Ahmedabad will be closing by 18th November. God's servants Bros. Lazar Sen, Eddy Williams and Paul Sudhakar shared the ministry of the Word based on Isa.60:1 , "Arise, shine" -Bible studies -devotional, expository, evangelical. The evening meetings drew a company of nearly four hundred. Small companies of saints from Mumbai, Miraj, parts of Karnataka, and Hindi areas participated. Special gatherings for youth and sisters were encouraging and profitable drawing souls to salvation and fresh commitment. Pray for those baptized and also renewed their commitment to the Lord.

Bro. Paul Sudhakar in his last message on the 16th dwelt on the phrase "Rise ...come away" (Song of Solomon 2:10) earnestly exhorting all to be ready for the imminent return of the Lord as a thief for the rapture of the Church. His closing appeal stirred the hearts of many to fresh commitment, while quite a number responded for salvation.

The Youth Camp held in a facility in the suburbs of Mumbai from 13th to 16th November drew good number and the ministry of the Word through God's servant Bro. John Stewart and others was very profitable. He covets our prayers as he proceeds to Nagpur to participate in the special meetings and campaign to be held there God willing from 21st to 25th November, during which Bro. G.T. Benjamin ministered the word of God, for which young brothers from Hebron are moving as a team. The Lord preserve them and grant His word a free course.

Please pray for the dedication and thanksgiving meeting of the newly constructed Place of Worship -" Jehovah -Shammah" at Tirupathi, God willing on 23rd November. Also pray for the dedication and thanksgiving service of the newly constructed Prayer House Bethel, at Nadikudi as requested by Bro.Ephraim, God's servant there.

Bro. J. Ashpia, God's servant, at Horeb Prayer House at VNRpet, Bitragunta, together with the saints covet our prayers for the construction of the branch Prayer House at Isukapalli.

The marriage of Sis. Anna Krupa, (daughter of Bro. R.S. Kuruvilla, God's servant at Patmos, Coimbatore), with Bro. Eldhose (son of / Bro. T.K. Varkey) was solemnized at Perwmbavoor, Kerala on 12th November, when Bro. Habakkuk from Hebron and others-shared the word. Let us pray for their united life.

Please pray for the marriage of Bro. Emmanuel (son of Bro. J.C. Rao, God's servant, Delhi) with Sis. Joyce (daughter of Bro.Malcolm Shepherd), God willing at Mussorie on 12th December.

Bro. Arvind Christian of Surat would have us to pray for him and family as they are proceeding to California, U.S.A, with their daughter Hannah who is going to be united with Bro. Sanjay Patel as life partner on 15th December.

Bro. R. Prabhudas (Obul Reddy) of Pulivendla was promoted to Glory on 4th November at Anantapur. He served the Lord faithfully along with his Government job, and through his instrumentality the Lord established a few assemblies in Rayalaseema. After his retirement he was fully involved in looking after the assembly in Gotur. Pray for the comfort of his wife, children and other family members.

Praying that we may be enabled as His holy nation to shine as lights in the midst of the growing darkness and distress, that is enveloping the nations,

I remain yours in His grace,
K.PHILLIP

1 Pet. 2: 9; Phil. 2: 14-16; 2 Cor. 4: 1, 5, 6

MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU - 3 BAKHT SINGH

Again in Heb.13:20,21 it says, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well -pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." It is only by inward peace that we can be sure and clear about God's perfect will. Without that peace, we cannot find God's will. There is one question which is put to us again and again everywhere, not only by young believers, but also by mature believers, and even God's servants, "How to make sure of God's will?". When people do not know how to find God's will, they make many mistakes in their business, marriages and plans in their lives, and they pay a heavy price afterwards for many years. Thus we have seen how necessary it is. to make sure that our peace is genuine and real, and not false.

Now let us see what kind of peace our Lord Jesus Christ gives us. First of all, it is the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). It is not by any good deeds that we can receive this peace. It is as He says, His own peace, He Himself, the living Person becomes our peace:. That is why He died and rose again. He died that we may die to our old nature. Then only, our Lord Himself can come and live in us by the power of His resurrection. Till then, you cannot find that peace. That peace does not depend upon Bible knowledge, or any human qualifications. He cannot live in us unless we are inwardly purified, cleansed and washed. No one can purify himself by his own efforts. The Lord Jesus Christ undertakes to cleanse us from every inward defilement with His own blood. Then He says, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid". He began the message with the same words as we read in John 14: 1. That true peace will deliver you from all your fears; fear of the past, fear of the future, fear of the enemy, fear of sickness, fear of death, fear of war and other calamities, fear of men and fear of loneliness. All these fears are driven away when the Lord Jesus Christ comes into us. No human activity can make you free from these fears. The Scripture says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment" (1 John 4:18).

(To be contd.)

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TIME IS AT HAND - 4

When was it last, my dear friend, that you turned for comfort and warning to the book of Revelation? If you would be asked to name your most favourite book which one would you name? I am sure the honest answers to these posers would reveal the general apathy even believers have towards this last book, the book of Revelation. Why should that be so?

Satan, our archenemy, has suffered a mortal blow with the release of this final book. While it is true that Christ gave him a deathblow on the cross (Heb.2: 14), the defeated foe is still allowed to walk around (1 Pet. 5:8) till his due time when he will be chained to the bottomless pit (Rev .20:2,3). Mankind would have never known his humiliating end, had not God given us the book of Revelation. Hence he opposes its record and prevents people from reading it.

Yet God has reserved a special blessing for those who would open this portion of Holy Writ and read its sacred contents. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev.1: 3). Public reading of the Scriptures is a practice of the early New Testament Church borrowed from the Jewish synagogues. Jews in dispersion, in order to keep the faith of their patriarchs alive kept gathering in small groups on Sabbath days. The Scripture was then publicly read. A local synagogue may have in possession only a few Scripture scrolls. As the early Scripture scrolls were hand-written the copies were few and many Jews did not have the fortune of owning them as we have today. Hence hearers were equally blessed. One may not have a copy or be a literate, yet anyone can be a hearer and doer of God's Word.

The book of Revelation is addressed to the whole humanity -the reader and the hearer. It is interesting to note that nothing is mentioned about understanding. We overstep the limits of our creaturehood when we try to size up God and His revelations according to human rationale. Where reasoning stops, revelation begins. Faith is rendered superfluous when everything could be grasped at the bar of reason. This is true of all things pertaining to divinity. This is not to suggest that God is against reason but simply that HE is much beyond our best thoughts of Him. We are time -bound mortals but HE is eternal. We are limited by space but HE is omnipresent. We suffer great limitations to our understanding but HE is Omniscient "Declaring the end from the beginning" (Isa.46: 10) .The fitting response to such Sovereign Ruler is to bow down in worship and do gladly and unreservedly His bidding. "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of this book".

Obedience is the organ of knowledge. God does not speak to merely inform but to impact us by the Word. Biblical knowing begins with mental comprehension but it does not end there. Biblical knowing is always experiential knowing. In His High priestly prayer of John 17 Christ tells us what it means to possess life eternal. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (17:3). Knowing is possessing and enjoying divine life. One possessed and governed by divine life sets aside his natural life and acts according to the divine life principle." For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom.8:2). Divine life liberates us. Divine life and Biblical knowing always go together and such a knowing is the result of implicit obedience.

The parable of the sower in the first three Gospels emphasises the importance of "hearing and keeping" the sayings. After narrating the parable and its meaning each Gospel writer places great emphasis on the manner of hearing. The closing instruction in Matthew 13:9 is, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear". The spiritual hearing is in view here. The Psalmist declared in Psa. 40:6 "mine ears hast thou opened". This is God's sovereign act in the life of any repentant believer: 6,3; Mark's Gospel tells us to "Take heed what ye hear" (4:24). God speaks and He expects the hearer" to give the more earnest heed ...lest at any time we should let them slip" (Heb.2: 1). The solemn words of Jeremiah speak to us the seriousness of non-attentiveness. Listen to Jeremiah 13: 15-17. "Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. But if ye will not hear it, my soul , shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eyes shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive".

Luke's emphasis is to "Take heed ...how ye hear" (8:18). God never speaks to amuse us or to add to our existing fund of knowledge. He speaks to awaken, to stir us to positive moral action.

It is written of Noah in Heb. 11: 7 that he was a man of faith. One day the warning from God came to him about a worldwide deluge. Having never seen rains or floods Noah could only imagine this global catastrophe. He could not understand but he believed. His faith brought reverential fear, which in turn stirred him to prepare a ship. He was a farmer but God commanded him to build this biggest floating vessel housing the biggest zoo. He did so and saved his house. "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:37).

Are you ready? Have you entered the Ark called Christ prepared for you at the shameful cross? "Blessed is he that heareth and keepeth the sayings of this book." Repent and run into Christ for cover, for the time is at hand.

(To be contd.)

P.S

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

Bethany
Tera Kalan
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Amritsar--143103
Punjab

1-12-2001

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious and prevailing Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose High priestly ministry, with His precious promises continues to be our strength and sufficiency -from the beginning of the year, even to these closing weeks of 2001. May we be found renewed in the spirit of our mind to prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God, as we are on the eve of entering into the New Year soon.

The saints and brethren of Bethany besides our fellow -labourers of various towns and cities and its neighbourhood are thankful for your prayers as well as participation in this Convocation held from 27th November to December 2nd in this village Tera, about 25 kms from Amritsar. About three hundred and fifty have been attending the gatherings, inclusive of those from the village and surroundings. Small number of believer's from Pune, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Madhya Pradesh were also present. The team of brethren from Jehovah -Shammah Chennai mainly have gladly been attending to the cooking with local brothers and sisters also, helping in various related needs of the kitchen and accommodation, besides supply of some daily provisions.

God's servants Bros. Eddy Williams, J.C. Rao and John Stewart have been ministering the word based on the theme "I will be thy king" Hosea 13:10, besides the morning and evening family prayers, with Bible readings from Colossian epistle. The Lord Jesus desires us to acknowledge that our help is "in" HIM and in Him alone. Apart from Him we will be pursuing on a course to our spiritual destruction, departing from the living God, as did Israel or Ephraim. Chapter 14 is a bright and blessed picture of the nation returning to Jehovah with repentance and confession. Verses 4 to 7 speak of what the Lord will finally do for Israel, brought, purified, beautified and built up under the promised reign of our Lord Jesus on David's Throne (Luke 1: 32, 33). In this age of grace the same blessedness is extended to us in a richer and fuller way spiritually. In His love and grace He is able to heal our backsliding, imparting to us His sanctuary, strength and beauty (Psa. 96:6) to edify and glorify His Church. Ten testified in baptism, while about twelve decided for the Lord and quite a number recommitted their lives unto Him to follow the King. Let us pray that the work of the Lord in Punjab be preserved as such, although they are only a little flock.

The marriage of Bro. Simon Soundade, (son of responsible brother Soundade of Bethany, Pune) with Rebekah (daughter of Bro. Michael Masih of Zion, Pathankot) took place on 30th November in Bethany, Tera. Pray for this young couple.

We may continue our thoughts on Daniel from chapter 3 of the same book. This is the chapter of the burning fiery furnace. The three men no longer had their leader, Daniel, to speak for them as in chapter 1, or to impart light and

understanding as in chapter 2. They had to prove the Lord for themselves. Faith is entirely personal, and above all else, the man who is called to the Kingdom, must be a man of faith and faithfulness. The chief concern of the man of faith is not his own well-being, but the honour of the Lord's Name. These men had great confidence in the Lord's ability to deliver them, but they were not allowing their conduct to be governed by the immediate outcome. God had revealed them the reality of the Eternal Kingdom as well as the frailty and doom of the earthly. They knew the truth, and the truth made them free.

Their souls were subjected to every test that man can devise, say by Nebuchadnezzar's mass psychology. Majority decisions, popular movements, cheers, gibes and threats, all these were used, and still are, to make a few weak men realise how absurd it is to stand true to the Lord in a world like ours. What Satan wanted and what he still wants is compromise, weakness, shame upon the Lord and conformity to the spirit of the world. The fiery furnace is only his instrument to force men into spiritual defeat. If they will accept his terms, they can lead a quiet and comfortable life. Thousands of Jews probably proved this. The faithful minority however, preferred the scorching flames to the shame of grieving the Lord, and they found that after all, hell has no power against those who walk in fellowship with God's Son. !

The early Christians were told not to count such trials as strange things (1 Pet.4: 12). The strange thing from heaven's viewpoint is, when Lord's people come to terms with the world in a sort of "peaceful co-existence". The early saints were also instructed as to the meaning of their sufferings, to the end that "ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer" (2 Thess. 1: 5). It would be a double tragedy, first to miss the precious companionship in the fires and to miss the glory of the Kingdom as well. The Lord keep us true to Him. We may consider further on Daniel in our next issue, God willing.

In the meantime we would like to set before you three Scripture fragments which we decided upon by prayer as the New Year's Motto Texts. They are as follows.

"The Lord (Jesus Christ) reigneth" (Psalm 99:1)
 "He hath said, I will never leave thee" (Heb. 13:5)
 "If we suffer, we shall reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:12)

May the Lord throw much more light on these Scriptures and illuminate our pathway day by day, as we desire to be counted worthy of His Kingdom and glory.

Thank the Lord for the profitable time saints in Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the UAE and also Muscat and Salalah in Oman enjoyed, through the ministry of the Word through Bro. Theodore Reginald, for four weeks finishing by 24th November.

God's servant, Bro. N. Rajamanickam of Walajah, N. Arcot district, was promoted to Glory on 29th November after going through periods of hospitalization of late, for surgery, and infirmities of old age. He had been labouring for the past four decades in association with Bro. Bakht Singh and others as an evangelist and teacher of His Word, taking oversight of the flock at the House of Rest, Walajah, and was "of note" (Rom. 16:7) among the early labourers of N. Arcot with late Bro. Noel Barrow and others of Vellore and late Bro. M. Stephen of Ambur. Let us pray for the comfort of all his family members.

Bro. Doraiswamy, (father-in-law of Bro. Selvaraj, one among the responsible brothers of Hermon, Bangalore) -one among the oldest of believers and helpers in the Lord's work there - was called home on 29th November after being in bed for several years, due to infirmities of old age. Pray for the comfort of family members.

Praying that we may be kept in closer communion and deeper commitment to our reigning, soon -returning King of kings, even our Lord Jesus Christ,

I remain yours in His grace,
 K. PHILLIP

Phil. 3: 12-14; Hosea 14: 4 -6; Dan. 7 .18,21, 22

MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU - 4
BAKHT SINGH

Fear will make you restless and take away your sleep and hunger. Fear is much more painful than any painful sickness. It affects all your nerves and the entire system of your body, and the whole body starts trembling. When fear comes in, the heart starts beating fast. You begin to think, "What is going to happen? What is going to happen?" That fear in you makes you to say that. No man can take away your fear, but the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1). All these fears will be removed one by one when you have the peace of the loving Saviour in you. This is the first kind of peace that the Lord gives, His own peace.

Secondly, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful" (Col. 3:15). This peace will make you feel one with every one else. No more Tamilians or Punjabis, no more rich or poor, no more white or black, no more Telangana or Andhra, no more Komati or any other caste. All differences are removed. That is what the Scripture says. We are called in one body. No man can bring that oneness. People have tried, but they have failed. But in the Lord Jesus Christ, we can be perfectly one with everyone, anywhere everywhere.

I had the privilege to visit many countries have never felt a stranger in any country. I did not know the language, but I could feel one with the believers there. No question of difference amongst us. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can make us one like this. Also the verse says, Be ye thankful (Col. 3:15). Real peace will make you thankful. There will be a note of praise and thanks- giving all the time. Otherwise, you are never satisfied. You begin the day murmuring and end the day murmuring. Always you find something wrong somewhere, either in the coffee, or rice, or rasam, or someone speaking about your head, nose, etc. But if you have real peace the Lord will teach you to be thankful in everything, in all situations, circumstances and conditions in life. We can thank God for His love, grace and mercy. Eventually everything turns out for our good.

Thirdly, this peace is for all the time. Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all (2 Thess. 3:16). God Himself will give you peace, and He Himself will be with you always. This peace will make you and keep you conscious of His very presence with you at all times. There are some people who cannot sleep at night alone. They are terrified by loneliness. If there is someone at home, they are happy. They are so afraid that they must have a little bulb burning all night. They are afraid of darkness. Do not think that these things will give you sleep. The Lord says, I am with you, don't be afraid. That consciousness of His presence is a wonderful thing.

Fourthly, in Phil. 4:7 we read, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus". This peace will keep you strong within. It is like a strong army around you. You are safe inside. God's peace will garrison you like a big army with weapons. Let there be famine, calamity, earthquake or war, you are safe and secure. Scripture says, "But the very hairs of your Head are all numbered" (Matt.10: 30) and your tears are bottled up (Psa.56:8). You are safe in Him. Let there be any change in the world around us, we are safe in our Lord, entirely and perfectly safe.

(To be contd.)

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DECEMBER 30, 2001

NO.26

TIME IS AT HAND - 5

The Book of Revelation is written for you. This is the strongest message that comes to each one of us as we open its sacred pages. Future may be bleak and dark to the unbeliever but to the Christian all the present unprecedented happenings in the world signal "the coming of the Lord". "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" is the refrain we read seven times. Though addressed to separate local churches in Asia minor they have relevance to every individual and all the churches.

It may come as a surprise to us as to why God chose only seven churches to receive His message. Were there no churches found in Asia minor apart from the ones found in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia? What about the assemblies at Hierapolis, Colosse and Troas? Was it an accident that God chose only seven and not more? It was not an accident when we see God's design in the rest of the books of the Bible. From the book of Genesis chapter one God's work is seen in cycles of seven. The opening account of creation inclusive of the final day rest took place in seven days. The number seven here stands for the entirety of the subject. Luke 19 speaks of a certain nobleman who had ten servants. Matthew twenty-five speaks of ten virgins who waited for the arrival of the Bridegroom. Luke fifteen speaks of a father and just two sons. Matthew 21 also speaks of a farmer who had two sons. Here the number ten and two and seven in the book of Revelation stand as representative numbers. Thus seven denotes perfection, fullness, entirety and this comes fifty four times in the book of Revelation.

The Apostle John uses two words - "grace" and "peace" to greet the readers and hearers of all the churches. Grace or "charis" is a distinct Greek form of greetings. Citizens of the Roman world greeted each other as "charis". Peace or "Shalom" on the other hand, is distinctly Jewish. By using "grace" and "peace" the apostle addressed to a new community called "churches" which is composed of Jews and Gentiles. Hence the greeting comes with an universal appeal. Secondly, "grace" and "peace" reminded the believers their "gift" and the cause of their gift. Grace is the cause and peace is the result. We have found peace only because God was gracious to us. It was God's mercy that He did not give us what we deserved. We deserved wrath and judgment. God in His mercy forgave our debt because Christ paid it all for us. Christ stands in defense of every condemned, guilty sinner and tells God the Father, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account" (Philemon 18). While God's mercy forgave us, God's grace put into our account all that we never could earn. "Christ Jesus...who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1: 30). All that is of Christ has become ours. Ruth the Moabitish widow came as a pauper, a nobody with a stigma that she belonged to the cursed race of Moab, but by marrying Boaz the kinsman- redeemer it was all changed. His wealth became hers. She was inducted into the mainstream of Judah's genealogy. For eternity she has carved out a name for herself as the great grandmother of king David through whom came our Lord Jesus Christ, the greater David (Ruth 4:21,22). This is grace. God offers us what we do not deserve.

The next thing that God offers us is "peace". The Bible speaks of two kinds of peace. Firstly, "Peace with God". This is reconciliation with God. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace. With God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5: 1). Justification is God's act of grace and faith is human response. At the cross man is reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:18-20). The second is "peace of God". This expression found in Phil. 4:7 speaks of "rest" for a believer. God offers every repentant sinner, reconciliation and rest. For our reconciliation Christ paid the total cost but to come into the full enjoyment of God's rest one must pay a price. This "conditional rest" comes to us in seven descriptive terms in the Bible.

Firstly, Positional Peace. John 14:27 tells us, "my peace I give unto you" and John 16:33 emphasises the same truth, "...in me ye might have peace". God's rest comes to us by remaining in Christ. By staying under the Headship of Christ, in His body we become partakers of His rest.

Secondly, Incomprehensible Peace. Phil 4:6 tells us not to be anxious about anything "but in every thing by prayer and supplication" we are told to make our requests "known unto God", Paul uses the Greek word "merimnao" here translated as "anxiety" or "care". Merimnao carries with it the idea of an unbearable weight placed on the head of a

person to disintegrate him, Worry kills a man, God does not fault us for having worries but certainly holds us guilty for "keeping" them. We are asked "to pray our worries out",

Thirdly, River-Like Peace. "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river..."(Isa.48: 18). Cities and civilizations have always been built on the banks of rivers. Rivers bring fertility to the soil. Through obedience to the commandments we become rivers of fertility to parched grounds around us.

Fourthly, Ruling Peace. "...let the peace of God rule in your hearts"(Col.3:15). The word rule here is the Greek term "Brabyoo" which means "an umpire". Used in Grecian games the umpire stood in the field as the deciding authority, we are saved from many a loss when we are guided and governed by God's Ruling peace. Allow the Spirit to prompt or prevent you.

Fifthly, Great Peace. "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Psa. 119: 165). Love of the Law of God is the condition for obtaining God's great peace.

Sixthly, Abundant Peace. "...The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in; the abundance of peace" (Psa.37: 11). "Meekness" is not weakness. The word "meek" carries the idea of "taming" a horse. It stands for controlled strength. , Christ said, "I am meek" (Matt.11: 29) and thus humbled Himself to the death of the cross (Phil.2:8) and brought the greatest blessing to the world.

Seventhly, Perfect Peace. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee" (Isa.26: 3). Our fiercest spiritual battles are fought in the citadel of our minds. We fall in thoughts before we fall publicly.

Dear friend, such a peace is yours for the asking, Is Christ your Saviour? Is He the Lord of your life?

(To be contd)

P.S.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

EI-Shaddai
16 Relli Road
Kalimpong
734301
W.B., India

19-12-2001

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

All honour and glory, praise and power be unto Him, even our Lord Jesus Christ, Who "Of old hast...laid the foundation of the earth", Who "art the same", and Whose years "shall have no end" (Psa.102: 25,27). May His eyes which have been upon us "from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (Deut. 11: 12), continue to lead and direct us, safe and sound, in His prepared paths, as we stand upon the threshold of the New Year. May His promised presence and precious promises be our hope and stay to love and serve Him according to His eternal purpose for us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The elders, servants, and saints of EI-Shaddai, Kalimpong would have us to thank and praise the Lord, for answered prayers for help, supply and provisions, -spiritual and temporal they have received so far, to begin the Convocation that is being held here from the 15th December. Those who have arrived from Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, Nagaland, Assam, Meghalaya, besides Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and other places, including Darjeeling District and Kurseong, number about three thousand already and many more would join by the weekend.

Bro.T.E.Koshy with a party of five from the International Assembly at Syracuse, North America, besides Bro. Phillip Wareham and his daughter from Sydney, Australia, all of them being visitors to this land for the first time, have added to the international character of this year's, Kalimpong Convocation. Some of the visiting brethren besides Bro.G.T.Benjamin and Bro.D.S. Christopher have been taking share in the family prayers and morning meetings. Bros. T.E. Koshy and Lazar Sen have been sharing the main ministry, based on the theme "Arise, shine"(Isa.60:1). There was a good response to the appeal made by the above brethren, calling souls to repentance and faith, and several hundreds took decision cards, besides others making a fresh commitment. We need to pray that they may

continue to walk in the light, and be found in the path that shineth more and more unto the perfect day (Prov.4:18).

Christendom as a whole is passing through what is generally spoken of or observed as the Christmas season. Though the Scripture is silent concerning the day of the Saviour's birth, we rejoice in the fact of the Saviour's birth according to prophecy in the fullness of time. Thus we read in Galatians 4, "...when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law...that we might receive the adoption of sons"(vs.4,5).The Saviour was born in Bethlehem, as the prophet had spoken in Micah 5:2. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratha, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting". Isaiah also prophesied nearly 700 years before His birth in Isa.9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: ...his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Let us pray that many through out the world may receive the Saviour born in Bethlehem, as their personal Saviour into their hearts, and be enabled to confess Him as Christ...my...able...Saviour" CHRIST -M-A-S transcending the traditions and the external observances of Christmas, to be His true disciples.

As special gatherings for this season and year ending are being arranged in all the assemblies of the saints throughout the land and beyond our shores, let us pray that the word ministered through song and scripture, may be effectual in leading souls to salvation, and the revelation of His coming Kingdom -the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, which shall rule over all the kingdoms of the world (Rev.11:15) and they seek to serve Him.

Let us also pray for the nations of the world as a whole that in these days of dread and distress, insecurity and instability they are facing, they give heed to the message of the world's Saviour, to come unto Him and receive rest and remission of sins and life everlasting.

The Saviour born in Bethlehem, it was told by Gabriel to Mary in Luke1: 31-33 "...he shall reign... and of his kingdom there shall be no end". Hence we may continue our thoughts from Daniel chapt.4, as to the characteristics of those who are to reign with Christ. The key verse here is, "Those that walk in pride, he is able to abase"(v .37). In this case, it was not Daniel, who passed through the experience, but Nebuchadnezzar. Nevertheless, Daniel was a close observer of the whole incident, and by it he was shown, how God deals with men in mercy, for mercy is an outstanding feature of this calamity -mercy and patience. How much easier it would have been for the Lord to have destroyed Nebuchadnezzar- at one blow! Instead of that, He warned him, and waited twelve months for him, dealt severely with him for seven years, and after all that, was able to restore him to the throne. There would be little hope of a place in the Kingdom for any of us, if God were not long -suffering, patient and persistent in His dealings with us.

We are not told that Nebuchadnezza- spoke in an act of defiance or boasting to an audience as Herod much later did in Acts 12. It may be that he spoke arrogant words to himself as he walked around his palace. We do not know. We do know that it is into the heart that the Lord looks (1 Sam. 16:7) and that there can be no place in His eternal Kingdom for the proud in heart. The Satanic kingdom began with pride of heart and for that reason God is said to hate pride more than any other sin. Well may we ask then, what He can do with us for we are all proud by nature. He will have to do what He did with Nebuchadnezzar- humble us unto the dust. The Lord writes this upon our hearts. God helping, we may continue in our next issue more about this humility.

As the Kalimpong Convocation is still on we shall be able to share more in our next issue about the grace bestowed upon all for His glory in this ministry.

We announce with sadness the Home call of our Brother Devapriyam Kurut on 15th December He had been in fellowship with us for several decades.

Please pray for the comfort of Sis.(Mrs.) Evelyn and all his family members. Please pray for the marriages of the following servants of God at Sangareddy on Wednesday the 9th of January, 2002 Bro.Shalem Raju with Sis.Apphia, and Bro.Samuel Stephen with Sis. Abigail and Bro.Haggai with Sis. Esther, that the Lord may make their joint ministry fruitful for His glory.

Praying that we may be prepared and provided for in the temporal and spiritual realm in our families and fellowship of the saints to enter into the New Year, with gratitude and praise unto Him, Who changeth not, and Who has hitherto kept us from falling, (Mal.3: 6; Jude 24).

I remain yours in His grace,
K. PHILLIP

Psalm 102:25-27; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 Timothy 1:14, 17

MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU - 5
BAKHT SINGH

The fifth kind of peace is healing peace. "Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth" (Jer.33:6). True peace will heal all your wounds. There are some wounds, which cannot be healed by ointment or medicine. They are inside. These wounds are caused by friends, relations, and strangers. When friends betray us, it causes very deep and painful wounds. In the same way, when children are unfaithful, it leaves a deep wound. When our enemies hurt us by words, they cause wounds and these wounds cannot be healed easily. They cannot be healed by any medicine. But God's peace heals every kind of wound caused by friends and enemies.

Sixthly, "Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them" (Psa. 119: 165). It is great peace. It gives you love for God's Word and says, "Nothing shall offend them". Many believers are offended very easily even over a cup of tea or coffee. If someone does not smile at them, they get offended. They keep away from meetings for many, many months. They say, "I will not go to Hebron, because that brother never spoke to me. I am not going there at all". Their peace has gone away. That is worldly peace. But here it says, "Nothing shall offend them" (Psa. 119: 165). Whether anyone gives us a cup of tea or not, it will not offend us. It is great peace.

Seventhly, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa.26:3). This is perfect peace. It, gives you strong faith in all situations. You can trust God's Word and His promises.

Now please tell me, "Have you got that peace?" You may ask, "How to find that peace?" Eph. 2:14 says, "...he is our peace". The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is our peace. Also "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom.8:6). When you are spiritually minded you find true peace. By dying to your old nature, you find true peace. By receiving divine nature, you find true peace. That is why the Lord Jesus Christ died, so that you may die to your old nature. He died to take away your punishment, and rose again to give you divine nature. And that nature gives you true peace. Then by hearkening unto His voice and obeying God, your peace will be multiplied. "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea" (Isa.48:18).

May our Lord speak to you and give you that ", peace. If you have not received that peace ask for it' do not remain without it, you can have it right now. (Concluded).

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