

Hebron Messenger

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NO. 3

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE MYSTERY OR: ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS—3

Our final section in this study will deal with:

IV. THE WAY TOWARDS A WORTHY WITNESS IN THIS MATTER.

Up till now, it has been necessary to major on the seriousness of divisions amongst God's people, and we have done so against the background of God's great thought regarding His Church. He sees it, and He has made it, as ONE ORGANISM in union with the Exalted Christ. He has, moreover, infused Christ's own Life deep into the hearts and spirits, of all believers, whether they realise it or not. Praise God; -He is there! Some might now be saying, -"Yes, indeed, I begin to see this Great Mystery (Eph.5:32), and I need to be helped into this New Basis for my Christian living". We would therefore make a few practical suggestions for any such eager ones.

1. Do not try to "get into Christ". If you are born -again you are already THERE! The trouble is you did not realise it, and because of lack of vision you were countenancing so many "old ideas which were robbing you of the true blessed ness of your "new position" (See 1 Cor.1 :30).
2. Take grace from the Lord to "put off" that old man (Adam and Adamic ways) and to "put on" the New Man (Christ and His thoughts).
3. Make the decision to "change garments" something very definite; -perhaps a solemn heart -ceremony between you and the Lord; -like a joyous "I will" at a marriage! (See Rom.7:4).
4. Learn a new habit of definitely referring all your inward needs to your New Source of Supply; -Christ your Living Head. (See Col.2:19; Phil.4:19; John 1 :16). As each new need arises, you COULD look up and say, audibly, Yes, I take that, too, from Christ; -and that, -and that!
5. Actually TREAT your fellow- believers as fellow-members of Christ (whatever may be their view); -not just as "Christians", or even as "brothers and sisters", -something FAR deeper now; part of the Organism! The Lord will surely help us to do just that, -and He will be glorified.
6. DO NOT SET ABOUT STARTING A NEW GROUP ACCORDING TO YOUR NEW VISION. TELL OUT YOUR VISION, AND PRAY. CHRIST MUST BE AUTHOR AND FINISHER. He might have much to teach you where you are. Just obey HIS movings and HIS timings.

Best of all

7. CLEAVE TO THE LORD HIMSELF, -not just to some new "understanding" that has come to you!(Acts 11:23; Col.1:18). Nothing must ever compete with a heart -attachment to CHRIST HIMSELF.

Those, we say, are just suggestions, and intended to be treated as such. If it all sounds too difficult, -just forget it, and only walk on quietly with the Lord. This matter is very much in His hands, and HE will

"perfect that which concerns us" (Psa.138:8). HE wants our Christian lives to be an unmixed joy to us, and He plans to make them such (See Acts 16:25).

Before we close, we would like to mention what we believe are the two main principles bound up with a full enjoyment of all that we have been talking about.

The first of these is REVELATION. By this we mean the in-shining, into the heart, of Light from heaven. We are not thinking here of sensational dreams or "visions", but the quiet entrance of new light on heavenly things, -in this case, a dawning upon us of the fact and reality of a corporate Christ. (This usually brings with it both a Hallelujah and a horror, -the horror that we had ever had a thought of "sectionalising" such an eternally -conceived, and eternity -bound, ORGANISM! ; -how foolish, -how childish, -and how sinful!)

Such "revelation" usually comes to us from God's Word, -personally read, or expounded to us through one of God's "seers", but it is always something that brings us to the dust, -as it did with Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road. But, -what a marvel; -I have been made ONE LIFE with the Risen and Exalted Second Man! All that He has, and is, is there to be shared by me! God has again "opened my eyes" (Psa.119:18); -the ENTRANCE OF HIS WORD has given Light (Psa.119: 130), and to the "simple"!!

In my own case, the Light was confirmed to me while standing at the departure pier at Southampton (UK) when a great ocean liner was about to leave. Passengers and friends had said their "goodbyes" at the quayside, and the passengers then had to climb up the gangway and go on board. Once aboard, -most of them went higher still to a point not so crowded, but from which they could still look down upon their waiting (and grieving?) friends. Most of them then produced from their pockets reel after reel of coloured paper streamers and, holding one end themselves, threw the residue down to their waiting friends, who were able to catch them al'd thus retain some "contact" with their travelling friends. Soon the whole side of the ship was gaily festooned by hundreds of such fluttering paper -ribbons, -quite a sight but familiar, probably, to most of us. But what an unexpected place for a divine REVELATION! Yet the Lord was quietly saying to me, -"Your Saviour thus went up on high, -to the very Throne of Glory; then, -from above, He SENT DOWN HIS RISEN AND EXALTED LIFE, sharing IT with His "waiting friends" below, and thus establishing an everlasting and ever -unbreakable UNION WITH HIM-SELF- like a Vine and its branches! You are IN that organism with all your fellow -believers, and that forever. And all that He has, He is now sharing -out with you!"

I thank God that today I see it still more clearly, and just as simply; the Life -Bond is there, -not a flimsy colour -tape, but Christ's own LIFE sent down to me from above. And all my brethren are "holding Him" too, -and there is an equal bond with all of them. That is the church to which I belong, and I know no other. All this went through my mind there at the quayside. Again we say, what a very strange place for a divine revelation of that magnitude! Praise God!

The second principle I have in mind is that of CRUCIFIXION; -an accepted crucifixion with Christ, and an in-working of it by the Lord. Those who would live by the New Resources must obviously abandon the old. That whole realm of Adam, in fact, is now crucified to us and we to it. That means that the old "divisions" have gone, too; -we are Jew and Greek no more, -East and West no more. For us, now, all derives from CHRIST, and all is heavenly. And we find too, that all those old "gaps" and "distances" have gone, and likewise those old "favourite labels" we may have gloried in! And we are left with the blessedness of Psalm 133; "brethren dwelling together in UNITY"; -one organism together, -and Christ Head over us all. All these are resurrection enrichment; -the results of crucifixion emptyings. But we would say; -blest emptyings; -blest ENRICHMENTS!

As for those old "labels", I know all too well how difficult it can be to be parted from them, -until we have seen the Heavenly Vision. So we may say, perhaps, that there is a cost, -if we dare to give it such an exalted name!

Reverting for a moment to that picture of the ship and the coloured streamers, -it occurs to me now that, more than likely, some of those who caught the streamers may have needed to empty their hands of "other things" in order to catch the tapes and to hold on to them; -perhaps a favourite walking stick, or a treasured handbag, -and contents! Appropriating the out poured Life of the Risen and Exalted Christ does carry "a cost(?)" for us all. But what gains will be ours; -Life -union with our Great Heavenly Friend; -the Highly exalted Lord of All! Henceforth we are to be "enriched BY HIM" in all things (1 Cor.1 :5).

We also mentioned Psalm 133, and that beautiful picture of "brethren dwelling together in unity", -the happy result, we said, of being willing to "pay the price". There can be little doubt that that small psalm (just three verses) is the most beautiful Old Testament picture of New Testament Christian unity, -and with God Himself "commanding" the associated blessing, -namely, -"LIFE FOR EVERMORE", or, we could say, a LIVINGNESS that never ends! We have to remark, -"What a simple prerequisite" (brethren in unity), -and yet, "What a sublime result", -vitality that lasts! That, certainly, is something most desirable, -as most of us will agree!

The rest of this tiny Psalm suggests that that whole enviable situation can be likened to two things; -the anointing OIL that flowed down from Aaron's head to the very skirts of his garments, and then DEW that drifts in from lofty Mount Hermon and then descends upon the (lower) mountains of Zion. It is interesting to note that, in both cases, it was something coming from above; -the "oil" and the "dew". That certainly throws light on the secret of Christian Unity today. The oil reminds us of "The SPIRIT of Life in Christ Jesus"(Rom.8:2), -whilst the dew makes us think of the beautiful freshness from heaven that came to the waiting disciples once that "oil" came down! Much more could be said, but we simply say now what a precious little Psalm, and what insights into what was then afar off day.

We trust you will forgive this temporary diversion, but we return now to our theme. We have been speaking of what we believe are the two main principles bound up with a practical enjoyment of true spiritual oneness with our Christian brethren, -namely REVELATION and CRUCIFIXION. In other words, we see the divine plan, and then we pay the needed price for being in it. But both of these are made possible by the GRACE OF GOD. May He help us and hold us, and bring us right in! And all for HIS glory!

(To be contd.)

C.R.G.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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January 22, 2003

Dear Fellow -Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath in sovereign grace chosen us in Himself before the foundation of the world, redeeming us by His precious blood, and sealing us with His Holy Spirit. As His "workmanship; created in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2: 10) may we all be enabled to walk in the good works God hath before ordained, to the praise of the glory of His grace

(Eph.1: 4, 7, 13, 14) The third Motto Text for the New Year reads thus-"...Behold, I make all things new" (Rev.21: 5).

This chapter begins with a glorious new heaven and a new earth, which will be the perfect eternal home for God's people -"NEW CREATION". Rev .21 and 22 describe this FUTURE CREATION, and in the book of Revelation we have the victorious completion of all that God started in the Book of Genesis.

Paul wrote, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5: 17) -not all things ought to be new, but "all things are become new". Paul was drawing a parallel between salvation and the creative work of God as recorded in Genesis one. Let us consider the comparisons that help us better understand what it means to be God's new creation.

Creation begins with God. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"(Gen.1: 1). Salvation begins with God, and He had planned it long before He made the universe (Eph.1: 4; Rev .13:8}. The prophet Jonah said it perfectly; "Salvation is of the Lord"(Jonah 2:9}. When we ponder the truth that God thought of us in eternity, before we were born, it makes us appreciate the marvel of His grace. Of course, whatever God begins He finishes (Phil.1: 6}. So the "new creation" is going to succeed. God planned salvation, provided for it and paid for it, and He will perform all that is needed to fulfill His wonderful plan.

Creation involves the Holy Spirit. "...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen.1 :2}. Apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit, no sinner could ever be saved. It is the Spirit that convicts us of sin (John 16:7-11} and reveals the Saviour to us. We were born again through the power of the Holy Spirit (John 3:1-8), and that same Spirit witnesses to us and assures us, that we are the children of God (Rom.8: 9, 14-17). Darkness, emptiness and formlessness were the condition of things, upon which the Spirit began to operate -a picture of a sinner. In six days of creation, the Lord FORMED and FILLED. The first day the Spirit formed light; and the fourth day the Spirit filled (lights, sun, moon). When we are apart of God's new creation, the Spirit is at work in our lives, to FORM us and FILL us. Most of us enjoy the FILLING, but we do not like the FORMING. However, both are necessary if we are to become all that the Lord wants us to become.

Creation involves God's Word. Nine times in the creation story we find the phrase, "GOD SAID". God accomplishes His will through His Word. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made...For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Psa.33: 6,9). The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to convict sinners (Acts 2:37), to impart faith (Rom.10: 17), and to give life (John 5:24), to those who trust the Saviour. He also uses the Word to transform the lives of His people, and conform them to Christ (Eph.5: 26,27).

Creation involves light. The words "Let there be light" (Gen.1: 3), got the creation moving, and, Paul saw in that a picture of our salvation. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4: 6). If the light of life has not entered our hearts, then we are still in the darkness of sin and not a part of the II new creation" (John 1: 6-13).

Creation was all of grace. Before God made the first man and woman, He prepared for them everything that they would need, and the same is true in the "new creation". When we were born again, born into God's family, we were born "complete in him" (Jesus Christ) (Col.2: 10). We were saved by grace (Eph.2: 8,9) and we must live and labour by grace (1 Cor.15: 1 0), drawing upon the riches of His grace (Eph.2: 7; Phil.4: 19). "In Christ" we have all that He is, and all that He has made available to us by faith.

Creation glorifies God. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psa.19: 1). The purpose of the "new creation" is that God may be glorified throughout all eternity. What God has done for us in Jesus Christ,

is "to the praise of the glory of his grace" (Eph.1: 6, 12,14). Our task as people living in the "new creation" is to see that everything we do brings glory to God (1 Cor.6: 19-20; Matt.5: 16).

God's old creation is a marvellous illustration of His "new creation". God speaks to us even through the beauty of a sunset -not only through the written Word, but also through the great book of nature, His "old creation". When Paul wrote 2 Cor.5: 17, he not only made comparison but also drew a conclusion. He begins with the word "therefore", implying that if we are a part of the "new creation", everything about us is new. We may not see it, fully understand it, much less live like it; but everything is new just the same. May the Lord make things really new for us this year.

According to the Society Rules, the Society of Trustees of the Indigenous churches in India, will be calling for our General Body Meeting this year, God willing or the 14th February, and notices have been sent to the members, as on the register in previous meeting last year in February .We seek your prayers for the same, that all who are members according to the above list be enabled to attend without fail. Kindly remember this in your schedule for the second week of February.

Pray for the Youth Camp which is being held at EI-Shaddai, Kalimpong from 22nd to 26th January and the special prayer meetings arranged for God's servants and responsible brethren as well as Elders for two days, when Bro. Paul Sudhakar with others will be sharing the word.

We thank the Lord for enabling Bro. T. E. Koshy to be here at Hebron, mainly in connection with the final touch of the printing and publication of our late Bro. Bakht Singh's biography, to be published through the O. M. Publishers, Hyderabad. Pray also for his brief itinerary to meet his family members at Trivandrum, reaching there via Bangalore and Coimbatore by 1st February and returning to Hebron God willing, by 10th February via Chennai.

Thank the Lord for enabling Bro. J. C. Rao of Delhi to be available for the ministry of His Word at Jerusalem, Kurnool on 13th and 14th January and in Adoni from 15th to 19th and finally at Beulah, D.M.R.Labs on 21 and 22nd. Do pray that the Lord may accomplish His word according to Isa.55:11.

The church at Jehovah-Shammah, Chennai, would have us to thank and praise the Lord for the blessings of the 15th and 16th January -Day Camp for Youth, held in their midst when more than 1000 participated, with Bro. John Stewart ministering the word based on "Looking unto Jesus" (Heb.12:2) and others sharing in songs and testimonies.

Praying that the enthroned King and Priest at the right hand of the Majesty on High may continue to perfect His new creation work of grace in all of us,

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K.PHILLIP

Ezek. 36: 26-28

Isa. 43: 19,21

2 Cor. 3: 4-6

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NO. 4

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE MYSTERY OR: ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS—4

As we now come to the close of this message, we find it in our hearts to re-echo some of the points we have made, -possibly amplifying them a little as the Lord leads us.

1) Regarding what we said about the GREAT IMPORTANCE OF Christian Unity, - we do well to remember what the Lord Himself said in such verses as Mark 3:24; —"A kingdom divided against itself, cannot stand", —likewise a city or a house (Matt.12:25). The Church, incidentally, bears each one of these three titles, but the point is that any rift in those entities will cancel out any possibility of permanence; -in fact it will portend looming disaster. This therefore comes as a strong warning to those of us who are expressly called to reflect and depict on earth that Glorious Kingdom, -as we live under the undisputed authority of our Lord. If the testimony is to have permanence, -it, too, must not be divided.

We should note also that the downfall of historical Israel was caused by idolatry AND ALSO DIVISION. The division came when Rehoboam came to power and sought advice from two opposing "camps"; -the older men and the younger men (!!). When he chose the policies advocated by the latter, it aggravated Jeroboam who forthwith revolted, and formed the kingdom of Israel under his own leadership -(see 1 Kings 12:6-17). Not long afterwards, we find BOTH KINGDOMS judged, and carried, piece by piece, into captivity in Babylon. (Perhaps the Lord had all that in mind when He spoke of a divided kingdom being unable to stand). (See also Matt.23: 37, 38).

How good it is that God now has His TRUE Israel, -"The Israel of God" (Gal.6: 16), -His heavenly and holy nation (1 Pet.2: 9), -a nation that inherits, in true spiritual terms, all those "shadow - promises" made to historical Israel. This great "family of faith. is God's NEW CREATION (2 Cor.5:17), where the very thought of " Jew" or "Gentile" is obliterated, and CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL. (Gal.3: 26-29; Col.3: 11). The verses we have quoted are from the pen of the Apostle Paul, -once a forceful "Hebrew of the Hebrews", but all those considerations are now, to him, but "refuse"(Phil.3: 4-8). Peter too, an equally dedicated Israelite according to the flesh, had his eyes opened after that revolutionary experience in Caesarea, and later wrote to his scattered friends, telling them that they were now part of God's new generation, His royal priesthood, His New nation (1 Pet.2: 9). We thank God that in that new nation there are no divisions, -but how careful we should be that Christians who are called to represent and reflect that Heavenly Reality should show a corresponding unity.

2) Referring now to our earlier mention of gaps" and divisions which exist between old and young Christians, -we would like to add that it is another sad example of God's people yielding to world trends, and world control. It was the world, and its evil prince (John 14:30; Eph.2:2), that first initiated, or introduced the trend, and then imposed it on God's unsuspecting people. That was a complete reversal of God's order (Deut.28: 13), and it reminds us of the upside -down situation depicted in Eccles. 10:7; -a real shame for God's people, and a great dishonour for the Lord Himself.

We suggest, too, that there is another form of separation or division that each successive generation needs to guard against. We refer to "literature gaps" that are made when one generation of believers fails to take

advantage of anointed works produced by gifted teachers of a previous generation. Simply because they are not "the latest". Such were fellow-members in the same Body, and we must be careful not to be cut off from them, and their "food supplied"! We think of men like C.H. Spurgeon, Andrew Murray, A.W. Tozer and others whose writings and "insights" are seldom matched these days.

Our final word must be a further re-echoing of those TWO IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES essential to our manifestation of real Christian oneness; -the way in to the real experience, and the true "testimony". These, we said, were REVELATION AND CRUCIFIXION (bound up, of course, with Resurrection). We must ask the Lord to shine His Mystery into our hearts, for it is only when that Vision grips us that we shall be able to pay the inevitable price for its implementation. But God is a God Who loves to "reveal secrets" (Dan. 2:28,29,47). And it is good to remember; too, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear (reverence) Him" (Psa. 25:14AV). May God help us to bow down before Him in wonder, love and praise, and to stay thus in all situations and under all circumstances.

As for that second principle; -CRUCIFIXION, that also is an essential part of the way. Once we have seen "the Mystery", God works it into us by way of the Cross. If we are to live in this NEW REALM of an organic oneness with Christ and all His members, a deep death and burial must pass overall that is only OLD and Adamic. Much of that, we might have prized very highly before, but, if it is OLD, it must go to the Cross. We remember how Paul, had boasted in his "old" national standing, religious standing, etc. , but, once he saw Christ he rightly counted all "old" things as loss (See Phil. 3:4-7). Revelation was certainly followed by a crucifixion in his case, and he had to be led into Damascus like a blind beggar. But that was the beginning of PAUL THE APOSTLE, living and serving IN UNION WITH his Risen Lord. To some people, (specially those who have been religious leaders) it may appear costly to be parted from that which, after all, is only Adamic, -only "Me", but that is THE WAY if we are to have a NEW life and ministry in the realm of Christ-All in all. But what indescribable benefits! - The Fellowship of the Mystery.

"One Body by the Cross" Eph. 2: 16
 "No Divisions among you" 1 Cor. 1: 10
 "And all that believed were TOGETHER" (Acts 2:44)

(Concluded)

C.R.G.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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February 16, 2003

Dear Fellow -Believers in Christ,

All praise and honour, glory and power be unto Him, even our Lord Jesus Christ, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling", our wonderful Saviour, "who hath abolished death, and hath brought light and immortality to light through the gospel". In earnest expectation, we therefore await "for the manifestation of the sons of God" to enjoy our portion and privileges of the new creation, even that of the "New Jerusalem", the holy city, having the glory of God. May our eyes be firmly fixed on this glorious

goal, being perfected through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. May we walk in faith and love and total obedience unto Him, Who is able to work all things together for our good (2 Tim.1: 9,10; Rom.8: 18,19,21; Rev. 21:7, 10,11; 22:7,17).

People who are in God's new creation, look at life in a different way from those who still belong to the "old creation", as seen in the main message of 2 Corinthians 5. To begin with, we look at suffering and death from God's point of view (2 Cor.5: 1-8). We know that life is temporary -(he compares the human body to a tent), and that the longer we live, the closer we get to death. But we are not afraid of death, because death is our doorway to the presence of the Lord. This does not mean that as believers we court death, but that we do not fear it.

We also have a different attitude towards life and service (5:9-11), for our motive for living and serving is to PLEASE God. We know that one day our works will be judged at the judgement seat of Christ, and this will determine our rewards (1 Cor.3: 5-17; Rom.14: 10-13). We see life as stewardship of gifts, abilities, and opportunities; and we want to be faithful stewards (1 Cor.4:2). Because we are in the "new creation. we also see ourselves in anew way (2 Cor .5: 12-15). If people think we are "peculiar", it does not upset us, because our chief concern is to PLEASE God (Note Acts 26:24; Mark 3:20,21; John 10:20). When we belong to the "new creation", we soon discover that the "old creation" crowd does not understand us. We realise that Christ died for us that we may LIVE for HIM. People of the old creation alive for themselves; people in the anew creation" LIVE for CHRIST and for OTHERS. We not only see ourselves in a new way, but we see Christ in a new way (5:16). To know "Christ after the flesh" means only to know Him as a human being in history, and not know Him as Sin -bearer, Saviour and Lord. Paul knew many facts about Jesus Christ before He met the Saviour personally, but what a difference it made when Paul said, a LORD, what wilt THOU have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

But this also means seeing other people in a new way (2 Cor.5: 16-21). Those who belong to God's "new creation evaluates people on the basis of a whole new standard. The fundamental matter is no longer" Jew or Gentile?" or "rich or poor?" _a but saved or lost". The Christian sees a world of lost sinners who need to be reconciled to God. If we are "new creation" people, then the way we read the newspaper or watch the news, and the way we do our jobs each day is governed by the ministry of reconciliation". Our great task in life is to bring sinners to God. "We are ambassadors for Christ.

When a "new creation" person drops into some situation in the old creation", there will often be conflict, because darkness hates light, and selfishness despises love. Whether it is Joseph in Egypt, Moses in Pharaoh's court, Daniel in a pagan palace, Paul and Silas in Roman prison, or Jesus Christ in the Jewish Temple, something has to change. Why? Because "new creation" people are "transformers and not conformers" (Rom. 12:1,2). The power of God is at work in and through their lives, and their lives make a difference in the situation.

Also there is always the danger of the "old creation" winning a victory because the "new creation" fails to draw upon the divine resources available from the glorious Christ. When that happens, the TRANSFORMER becomes " CONFORMED to this world", and starts to live like the people of the aold creation". Compromise leads to conformity, and conformity leads to defeat. It is when the believer is separated from sin (2 Cor.6: 14, 7:1), that he or she exerts the great influence for God.

Because of Adam's fall the "old creation- is now in bondage and travail, and is a "groaning" creation. But when the Saviour returns in power, He will deliver His creation and make it a glorious creation (Rom.8: 18-25). Believers too will be delivered and experience the redemption of the body (Rom.8: 23). God will give His people new bodies, perfectly suited to the new environment of glory. What a day that will be!!! Best of all, we will be like the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 3:112) and serve Him forever, before "the throne of God and of the Lamb"(Rev.22: 3-5). In the meantime, God is transforming His people to make them more and more like His Son (Rom.8: 29). God's people are thus" the community of the cross" and by its power operating in them, they become" the community of the new creation", free from curse and

corruption, in the power of Christ's redemption. The Lord make us more and more such a community, of every nation, tongue and kindred.

The believers in Andamans would have their new House of Worship completed soon, with Bro. M. Jeremiah, Elder at Jehovah-Shammah with others being there for the prayerful supervision and ministry of the Word. They are expecting the dedication by the 15th of March 2003, followed by a few days of mini Convocation. Bro. D. Sundararajan, the only elder living, among those appointed by late Bro. Bakht Singh is in Chennai, ministering amongst us. God willing, he with others would be also participating in those days of dedication and convocation in Andamans. Let us pray for him and others, for his ministry in India and Andamans.

Bro. Anand, God's servant, Pallavaram and family members express their thanks for the gracious touch of the Lord on their eldest son Joshua, in answer to the prayers of the saints, after the very serious operation he underwent, followed by many weeks of hospitalisation.

Pray for the ministry being fulfilled by brothers Theodore Reginald and Paul Sudhakar at Hebron and some of the sister assemblies of Hyderabad. The Special Meetings and the Youth Camp they participated in, in the past, the former at Bethany, Rourkela, and the latter at Kalimpong were blessed of the Lord for the salvation of souls as well as growth in grace, in the lives of many hundreds who participated.

Bro. T.E. Koshy covets our prayers for the speedy completion of late Bro. Bakht Singh's biography, so that it may be handed over to the press through O.M. before he leaves for Thailand by 19th February, for the special meetings there. Bro. D.R. Devadoss, who underwent surgery of urinary bladder a few weeks ago, has become very weak and covets our prayers for the Lord's grace to rest upon him.

Bro. Y.A.S. Kumar, who was associated with us as a servant of God for the past two decades, was called Home on 16th February. Pray for the comfort of his wife and daughter.

May the Lord help us all, as we long to be His "new creation people" in "all holy conversation and godliness" looking for the new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness",

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K.PHILLIP

2 Peter 3:11-14

Isa. 65:17-18

2 Cor: 3, 5, 6, 17, 18

YE ARE MY WITNESSES—2
BAKHT SINGH

The apostles were threatened for speaking about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. But they said, "...we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). You may use the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and talk about His miracles, but people will not be offended. Many people had seen the miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ during His ministry upon the earth. But when He said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee", they were angry with Him (Matt.9: 2; Luke 7:48). The same people who had seen many miracles opposed Him (Luke4: 40; 7:21). When He performed miracles they did not question Him saying, "How are you doing these things?" Rather, they went after Him to see more miracles, but when He said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee", they said, "This is blasphemy". In the same way when the apostles spoke about the resurrection opposition came. If the Apostles had said that the lame man was healed in

the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, they would not have been angry; but because they said, "...by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead..."(v.10), they faced opposition. Thus we find that the power of resurrection working in us will bring much opposition from the enemy. The Lord Jesus Christ performed many miracles but the miracles did not defeat the devil. He gave many sermons and He also spoke with authority. Even through that He did not defeat the devil. It was only when He died, was buried and rose again, that the devil was defeated. The devil made people to say to the Lord Jesus Christ, "Come down from the Cross and we will believe in Thee". The Mohammedans say that Jesus came down from the cross and went to heaven. The Lord Jesus died and was buried according to the Scriptures, and rose again according to the Scriptures. That is the only power that defeats the devil. That is why the Apostle Paul says in Phil.3: 10, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection".

Many believers only think of signs, wonders and miracles. They are ignorant of the real power of the Lord Jesus Christ given to them. When we appropriate by faith the power of resurrection, we will be made more than conquerors over every sin. "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom.6:2). That is why we find that the apostles kept on giving the same message with power. "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33). Without the power of resurrection our lives remain barren and our ministry unfruitful. That power is manifested only when we learn to appropriate it by faith. The cross means death, resurrection and power, and it is by identifying ourselves by faith with the Lord Jesus Christ in a threefold manner, that we receive God's power. By the power of His death we are able to die to our sinful thoughts, deeds and words. By the P9wer of burial, all our sinful desires are buried and forgotten, and by the power of resurrection we go on conquering and receiving new life. All these three go together.

(To be contd.)

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