

Hebron Messenger

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NO 20

HELP FROM ABOVE -10 SEVENFOLD HELP OR BLESSINGS FROM THE LORD (Sure and Certain Hope)

"Psalm 121 ends with the wonderful promise of God which points to the eternal future. "The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even For EVERMORE" (v. 8). The words "for evermore" refer to the unending future. God promises to preserve us forever. A believer has a glorious future. God Who lives in eternity will protect and preserve us for ever and ever. Only a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has a hope for the future. Whenever we come across the word 'eternity' we are reminded of the glorious hope we have in Christ Jesus. That glorious hope is also called the 'sure and certain hope' (Heb.6:18-20). Those who do not have this sure and glorious hope, are in a pitiable condition. They have only darkness ahead of them. On the contrary a believer has a bright future to look forward to. What are you looking forward to in the eternal future? The closing words of Psalm 121 speak to us of the hope of glory we have in Christ Jesus. In the Bible we read about the sevenfold hope a believer has.

1. The hope of His coming: The first one is the hope of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. "...if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). The Lord Jesus Christ has clearly promised that He is going to come again to receive us unto Himself. Today many Christians are confused about the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, mainly because different preachers give different opinions on the subject. But all that we have to do is to simply believe the Word of God. He said He would come to take us away and we must believe it and accept it. Remember the warning given by the Lord Jesus Christ that He would come at a time. when no one is expecting Him. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44). Another description of His coming is given in 1 Thess. 4: 16-17. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord". To those who would put simple faith in the Word of God, this statement is clear enough. So this is the first hope of glory that a child of God has. Are you looking forward to meeting the Lord Jesus Christ face to face?

2. The hope of meeting all the saints: The second hope of glory is found in

1Thess. 4:14. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him". This verse makes it clear that we are going to meet the believers who have gone before us to heaven. This is a wonderful hope we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. Just think of all the great saints who have served the Lord and are now with the Lord. We are going to meet all of them. We are going to see them face to face. What a wonderful experience that will be! For believers there are no eternal good byes. Death is only a temporary separation. At the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, we will be reunited, never to be separated again. .

3. The hope of Rapture: The third hope of glory is mentioned in 1Thess. 4: 17. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air". That is the hope of rapture or being caught up. This is going to be the greatest experience anyone can have. When the Lord Jesus will come again in the clouds, the believers who are alive on the earth will be suddenly transformed and will rise upwards to the clouds to meet the Lord. Today if you want to fly in the sky, you need an aeroplane or a helicopter. But that day, amazingly you will be able to rise up defying the laws of gravity. This is called the rapture of the saints. When this will happen, suddenly believers will be missing from the face of the earth. Many will not know what has happened to the believers. But our hearts must be filled with this hope of glory.

(To be contd.)

N.J.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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September 22, 2005

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious and mighty Name of our Lord Jesus, Who loved us and gave Himself for us, that He might sanctify and cleanse us, and present us to Himself in the fulness of time, a glorious Church -holy and without blemish. May the Holy Spirit sustain us in this mystic union with our heavenly Bridegroom, in this living love relationship, unto His glorious appearing again, to take His Bride unto Himself (Eph. 5: 25-27,32; Titus 2:11-14; Rev. 22:12,13,17).

We have been considering Apostle Paul's perspective of the Church, a new humanity, as chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, but redeemed through the precious blood of Christ, and sealed by His Holy Spirit, to become His possession. Paul had tirelessly worked in the face of great difficulties, but was now imprisoned, as we read from his second epistle to Timothy. He was

facing martyrdom for his faith. Although he was ready to sacrifice his life, he was still deeply concerned for the Church which would remain on this earth long after his departure (2Tim. 4:6; Phil. 2: 17, 21). His concern was legitimate because he knew her condition was on the decline. He also knew the challenges she had already faced and would continue to face. He knew the Church would have no rest from the continuous onslaughts of all manner of adversaries, designed to defeat her and make her work on the earth of little effect. So even in the confinement and loneliness of a prison cell, without his books or parchments, this apostle with a shepherd's heart was occupied with the well being of the Church. He was also deeply concerned about Timothy, his son in the faith, who would be left in such a situation of decline.

If a short phrase could summarise his concern, it would be that of "a turning away". In 2 Tim. 1: 15 he writes, "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me". In 2: 18 he writes of men who have erred concerning the truth. Further also he describes those who "turn away their ears from the truth" (4:4), and Demas, who deserted him for the present world instead of working for that which is eternal (4:9). This turning away -going astray and desertion - was reflective of the general condition of the church at that time, especially in Asia Minor. Paul was not personalising and was not simply offended since his ministry failed to be adhered to by the church. Paul already knew that a crown of righteousness awaited him. He knew that he would soon be with the Lord in His heavenly Kingdom. He was not wallowing in self-pity because his work was rejected.

Paul's concern for the Church was not only that correct doctrine would be taught, but that the revelation he received from the Holy Spirit and expressed in his written and verbal ministry, would be the actual reality of the Church (Acts 20:32). In other words, he wanted the church to match his revelation of the Church. Yet there was a turning away, which resulted in a disconnect between the revelation and the practical reality. Because of the human element, the Church in history is constantly at the risk of sinking downgraded. We think and talk of her in puny terms that match our own limited mindset, instead of the divine revelation that comes from the mind and heart of God. Hence our church life locally will reflect the same earthly condition.

God's eye view of the Church as revealed to Paul is written in Ephesians 5, and the mystery of Christ and the Church, in verse 31. His primary work on this mystery is found in his letters to the Ephesians and Colossians. The fundamental underlying reality of this mystery is that Christ is attached to the Church. There is a vital essential union between Christ and the Church. In the divine revelation given to Paul regarding Christ and the Church, two main divisions may be considered. Christ is the Head and the Church is the Body. Secondly, Christ is the Bridegroom and the Church, the Bride. These are two relationships based on union and attachment. One is based on a union of life, and the other on a union of love. What a high revelation regarding the Church and her status in Christ! The Lord renew our minds, and being transformed by the washing of water by the Word, may we be given the higher vision and appreciation of the Church -the Church of God's eternal purpose (Eph.3: 10,11).

The month of October is marked by Camps, Convocations and Special Gatherings in the assemblies of the saints, taking advantage of the holidays for the furtherance of the Gospel., and the establishment of believers in His House. Bro. M.G. Lingdong and brethren of Berachah, Gangtok, Sikkim, would have us to pray for the Convocation to be held in their midst from 8th to 16th October. God's servants Bros.. Lazar Sen, John Stewart, J.C. Rao and others would be ministering the Word. Do pray that the Lord may keep them in His plan and provision.

Bro. John V. Rao and brethren covet our prayers for their Annual Youth Camp, God willing to be held at Bethany Christian Assembly, Koel Nagar, Rourkela, from 9th to 12th October. Bro. Sam Williams from Hyderabad with others will share the ministry.

God willing, the Annual Youth Camp of the church at Jehovah-Jireh, St. Thomas Mount. Chennai, will be held from 7th to 12th October at their House of Worship. Bros. Theodore Reginald and N. Jayaraj (Tirupathi) will be the main speakers. with elders and servants from Jehovah - Shammah leading and sharing in the ministry. Pray that the Lord may provide accommodation and food . arrangements as it is a stay in Camp, with many from the South expected to participate.

On the 13th September we had the opportunity to have the new Prayer House at Duvvur (near Mydukur) dedicated, followed by servants' gathering. Leading God's servants from Rayalaseema, Bros. B. Samson, Joseph Kurien, Nehemiah, Dyva Prasad and others also participated in the ministry. Pray for God's servant Bro. Bhaskar and family there with other helping brethren for the ongoing ministry.

With a sense of sorrow and loss we mention the sudden Home-call to Glory of Bro. Joshua Jayakumar, on Wednesday the 14th September at Chennai. He had been functioning as a deacon, as well as a Youth leader, besides actively participating in the many-sided practical activities and responsibilities~ in the church at Jehovah-Shammah, Chennai for more than two decades. On the Lord's Day, the 11 th September, he took the Gospel ministry, besides participating in the church prayer on Tuesday the 13th. But on Wednesday the 14th afternoon he finished his course while at home, with his wife and sons. As the marketing manager of a multinational company, while traveling abroad, he visited our assemblies in France, U.K., United States, besides Singapore and other places. He took the opportunity to meet and minister to the saints he came across. They too were shocked at the suddenness of his departure. The funeral which took place on Sunday the 18th, at Chennai, drew a big company from the assemblies of the city, besides his esteemed colleagues and associates in the industry. Many testified of his honesty and sincerity and his desire for soul-winning activity. His promise for this year was from Isa. 62:3, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God". The family believes that the Lord has fulfilled this promise as he followed the Lord faithfully with his wife Sis. Prema for the past four decades and the Lord took him Home at last. Let us continue to pray for them all.

Kindly pray for God's servant Bro. B. Samson (Chinna Samson) of Venkatapuram, undergoing treatment for falciparum malaria in Hyderabad. Also pray for young Bro. Vijay Paul of R.K. Puram Assembly in Secunderabad, who underwent brain tumour operation and is unconscious since four weeks.

Praying that we all may be able to say with the Psalmist, "My times are in thy hand" (Psa. 31 :15), and hence redeem the time to love and serve Him acceptably,

John 12: 26, 2 Tim. 1 : 7-9 , Rev. 22 : 3-5.

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K. PHILLIP

GOD'S SERVANT 7

BAKHT SINGH

There are different castes in India like Madiga and Mala, and both can be great men in the world, but when it comes to the question of marriage, one caste thinks itself better than the other. Outwardly they seem extremely well-educated people, but when they make enquiries about the marriage of their children, they will try to find out whether they are Madigas or Malas, and will protest that they have different customs and different habits, so cannot possibly live together. With us also as God's servants, really it is the Madiga nature that is coming out, and causing all these troubles among the people of God, and bringing reproach on the Name of Christ. The reproach of Egypt has not been rolled away.

Even in small matters of personal hygiene and cleanliness we should bear ourselves worthily as God's servants. Some people will live dirtily even though they are given the best and most beautiful room in the whole of India. When they go to the bathroom they will make the place filthy, and allow dirty clothes to be hanging here and there. It would not take long to have the bathroom washed with one bucket of water, or to wash those dirty clothes, but because of their old nature they neglect even so simple a duty. When they go outside, they look very smart and nice. But the old nature is still there. Do not think that this is a small thing. You betray your true character because of all these small weaknesses whether in the bathroom, or in your work. As a child of God and as His servant you must be clean in your person, in your habits, in your thoughts, and words, and life. God has saved you, so not only your soul, but also your nature should become clean and white in every part. As God's servant you must be free from every reproach of Egypt. It is in small things that you are going to be trained first, and God will bring you to Gilgal, till the reproach of the world is rolled away from you, both within and without, and then you will stand boldly before the people proving that you are God's servant, in spite of every handicap.

(Concluded)

A LIVING WELL BAKHT SINGH

Scripture Portion: Isaiah 12

The salvation, which we have in the Lord Jesus Christ is compared to a well of water. In John 4:14 the Lord spoke of "a well of water springing up into everlasting life" and in Isaiah 58:11 the obedient behaviour is compared to "a spring of water, whose waters fail not". God's desire and purpose for His people is that we should become living wells, wells whose waters fail not, but spring ever fresh and clear. In Isaiah 12 we see how we can become such a well.

"And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me" (v. 1). This verse describes a sinner deserving the wrath of God. Every sin we commit by thought, word or deed deserves punishment as we read in Rom. 1: 18 and 2: 5,8 and 9. Because God is just, He must punish every sinner, and that is why His wrath must be revealed against every ungodliness. Now Isaiah the prophet foresaw how the Lord Jesus Christ would take upon Himself that wrath on our behalf. Isaiah prophesied in detail about the birth, suffering, death, resurrection and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. In chapter 53, Isaiah foretold how the Lord Jesus would bear the punishment of our sins. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5). The Lord Jesus Christ became flesh; and also became our substitute. God's wrath fell upon Him and on the day that He was crucified, the sun itself became dark. God hid His face from His Son. Because He suffered on the cross, God's anger is turned away from us. In John 1:29 we read how John the Baptist pointed to the Lord Jesus and cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world". Those who repent of their sins and accept the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour can say by faith: "God's anger is turned away from us; we are no longer under condemnation". If so far you do not have that assurance, you can have it today. You have only to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has borne in your stead all your punishment for every sin, including your sinful thoughts.

Then Isaiah says further, "...thou comfortedst me" (12: 1) or in other words, "Thou gavest me true peace". The great proof that the Lord has taken away our punishment is the inward peace He has given us, a peace, which the world cannot give. Our Lord said in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you...". He said this at the time when His disciples questioned Him why He should suffer and die, even though He had told them plainly that He would rise again on the third day. He suffered and died to give them peace. If you have not yet found true peace, only believe on Him and do not doubt your salvation. Then the peace that will fill your heart will prove that your sins have been forgiven and that the Lord has washed you and made you clean.

In Isaiah 12:2, we find the prophet rejoicing in the fact that the Lord had become his righteousness and salvation. "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation". Many people think of God in an earthly sense, that

He is so far away, but we know that we can have a definite experience of the living God, and that is why He is called Jehovah in many parts of the Old Testament -a God Who can be experienced, a God Whose voice we can hear; Whose presence we can feel; a God Who wants to reveal Himself in every true sense.

(To be contd .)

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NO 21

HELP FROM ABOVE -11 SEVENFOLD HELP OR BLESSINGS FROM THE LORD (Sure and Certain Hope-2)

"A believer has a sevenfold hope. In our last issue we considered the hope of the Lord's second coming, the hope of meeting all the saints and the hope of rapture. Now we will consider,

4. The hope of being transformed into His likeness: The fourth hope of glory is given to us in 1 John 3:2. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM; for we shall see him as he is". According to this verse, we are all going to receive a glorious body, just like the resurrected body of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will be reflecting His heavenly glory. We find some characteristics of the resurrected body of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospels. It is very much unlike the physical body. It is a visible body, but it can become invisible when it wants to be. It does not need food, but it can eat if necessary, as the Lord Jesus did after the resurrection. This glorious body can travel any distance in a second. It can be touched, but it can also go through a closed door. These characteristics show us that this glorious body is not governed by the laws of nature. Remember, we are going to have such a body one day. Then we shall be like our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. The hope of public proclamation as sons and daughters of God: In Jude 24 we have a reference to what is going to happen at the end of this age. That is the public proclamation and the presentation of the sons and daughters of God. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to PRESENT you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy". According to this verse, God will present each one of us, one by one, before the presence of His glory. Romans 8: 19 says, the whole creation is waiting with earnest expectation for that day. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God". Today we are insignificant in the eyes of the world, but on that day God will show His glory to the whole universe through you and me. Even angels will admire us. They will begin to see the wisdom of God in transforming us into the likeness of His Son. This is an important aspect of our hope of glory.

6. The hope of heavenly reward: In Rev. 22: 12 the Lord speaks to us of the

next hope of glory. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work "shall be". The Lord Jesus has given us a promise to reward us. This gives us great encouragement in serving Him. When I was a small child, one of my uncles used to bring sweets for us whenever he came to visit us. So whenever he came, we always looked at his hands first, before looking at his face. We wanted to make sure that he had brought sweets for us. In Rev. 22: 12 the Lord Jesus has promised that He will bring His reward with Him. Are we looking forward to that reward? That reward is not according to the amount of work we have done but according to our faithfulness. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:23,24). The Lord's reward for you and me, is a part of our hope of glory.

7. The hope of reigning with Christ: This is the grandest hope of a believer. "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5). Do you believe this verse with all your heart? If you are a believer in Christ, you will reign forever and ever. The people of this world know nothing about these heavenly truths. They live only for this world. They have no idea of what eternity holds. The Lord Jesus will share His reign with His simple believers. Every kingdom on this earth will come to an end. But the children of God will reign forever and ever. The Lord Jesus said, "Fear not. little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). You may be poor and illiterate out remember, if you are faithful to the Lord Jesus, the Father will give you the Kingdom.

We have briefly considered from Psalm 121 the sevenfold help or blessings that we receive from the Lord, Who made the heavens and the earth. If you believe them, you can truthfully say with the Psalmist, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth" (Psa. 121: 1,2).

N.J.

(Concluded)

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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October 3, 2005

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

May His Name be praised, even the wonderful Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath in His goodness and mercy led us into the tenth month of the year. As the branches attached to Christ the Vine, may we experience the flow of life from Him to fulfill our function effectively, producing fruit to His satisfaction. The Lord makes us fruit-bearing disciples to the glory of the Father, walking worthy of Him (Psa. 23:6; John 15:5-8; Col. 1: 10).

In continuing our meditation of the relationship of Christ -Christ as the Head of the Church and the Church His Body, and Christ as the Bridegroom and the Church the Bride, let us pray that the Lord may enable us to live out this revelation in practical reality. Many are turning away and the Church is getting detached from Christ. Her union with Christ is losing its vitality. /3he is allowing herself to descend from her original status. Once this occurs she 19S~\$lher effectiveness, since the church has no real power apart from Christ. This IS why the Lord told the church in Ephesus that He would remove her lamp stand if she did not repent of forsaking her first love. The New English Version reads, "Think from what a height you have fallen!" (Rev. 2:5).

This is what Paul was concerned about 30 years earlier when writing his second epistle to Timothy. The turning away is a falling from the heights -the heights of the union the Church experienced with Christ as her- Head and Bridegroom. It is a tragic and sad state. She descended from the heights and her effectiveness waned, because the real lasting effectiveness only comes from the union and attachment to Christ, in the here and now. It cannot be contrived or man-made. This revelation which Paul received concerning the union between Christ and the Church is so vital and important that it is challenged at every turn. It would be foolish to think otherwise.

Soon after Paul wrote Second Timothy, he died as anticipated. Peter also was martyred around the same time as Paul. This all occurred around 65 A.D. Then about 30 years passed and nothing is written. There is a long pause in the Biblical narrative. After this extended time period, seemingly out of nowhere John suddenly reappears, though we lost track of him after the early chapters of Acts. He now begins to write. He knew three things intimately. He knew the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. He knew the heavenly ministry of Jesus Christ carried out by the Holy Spirit. He also knew the history of the early Church from the very beginning. In fact he knew the history of the Church thirty years longer, than the other Apostles. He knew it all first hand, for he was part of it himself. He was involved intimately in each step of the way. So he saw the heights of the Church, and the decline or descent of the Church. He knew Paul's concern in

second Timothy regarding the turning away from the revelation he had received, and it was a very legitimate and valid concern. After Paul's death John worked in Asia Minor, especially at Ephesus and saw with his very own eyes the results of this turning away.

Through these ministries and writings of the early Apostles we realise how much the Lord nurtures and cherishes the Church even in her descent from original heights and status. We may see the Lord's wisdom in using the aged beloved disciple to reach down, repair, encourage and care for the Church. When we read John's works, we must feel uplifted, warmed, enlightened and encouraged and even healed 'in our hearts. Incidentally when the Lord called John (Mark 1: 19) he was "mending the nets". So John now proves to be amender and repairer of the work built by Apostle Paul. The Lord is indeed kind and merciful in giving us this revelation from the heights for our well-being and growth, as well as repair and up building.

Apostle John's distinctive focus is on eternal life. This is the new life we receive when we are born again as Christians. In John 14-17, generally spoken of as the Upper Room discourse, he discloses some intimate and precious things from the heart of Jesus, He speaks of loving one another As He has loved us. Then He offers His High priestly prayer, wherein He asks the Father, that although we are in the world, we should be kept from the evil one, be sanctified by the truth and participate in His oneness. At the end of the Gospel the dialogue between Jesus and Peter is mentioned. The Lord asked Peter thrice whether he loved Him. He responded positively each time. On the basis of that the Lord admonished Peter to shepherd His sheep-not Peter's sheep, but His sheep. All this demonstrates how much our Lord cares for His Church, purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

When one is born again and becomes a Christian by His Spirit's regenerating work, he is baptised into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). It is an automatic reality: one cannot run away from it or pretend as if it does not exist. Therefore one cannot say, "I love Jesus, but riot the Church". He loved the Church and gave Himself for it (Eph. 5:25). Our love for Him is called into question if we do not love the Church. Since we are members of His Body, the health of the Body should concern us. If the Church is in decline, we should be spending time in prayer. Also as members of the Body, we should fulfil the function or the ministry He has for us (1 Pet. 4:10; Eph.4:12; Rom. 12:1-13). He did not save us that we may simply go to heaven, and in the mean time do nothing that pertains to His interests on the earth.

Collectively the effective ministry of the Church is determined by her attachment and union to the Head or the Bridegroom. An absence of this means, our service is just another human enterprise or lifeless performance of a religious work. If the Church is detached from her Beloved, she would lack such resources as faith, hope, grace, wisdom, strength and compassion. Yet these are what people need most. Such a church may be busy doing many outward activities, but is ultimately not effective. Busyness and effectiveness are entirely two different things. Her effectiveness, existence and status, she derives from her dependency upon her Head and her Beloved. She wholly relies upon Another. May such a living and loving attachment to Christ be our practical experience

and daily reality, as we seek to finish the work He has given us to do.

Please pray for the Gospel Campaign by a team of Hebron Youth at Ajmer, Rajasthan from 14th to 23rd October.

Also pray for the Holy Convocation to be held at Beer-Sheba; Ahmedabad, from November 1st to 6th.

Please pray also for the Special Meetings to be held at Mumbai from 30th October to 2nd November, in which Bros. Theodore Reginald, John Stewart and Jayanthi Rao of Tirupathi will share the Word.

Bro. M.D. Paul, elder of the church at Bethany, Nandyal, would have us to thank the Lord for his recovery after a minor paralytic attack.

Please pray for the ministry among children during Dasara holidays through Vacation Bible Schools and Special classes, in more than 15 assemblies, mostly in Andhra Pradesh.

God's servant Bro. Dyvapasad and others with him from New Jerusalem are proceeding to Srikakulam area for a few days for V.B.S. ministry, besides preaching the Gospel in the village areas. They covet our prayers.

It has pleased the Lord our Saviour, to promote to Glory our co-labourer, God's servant Bro. V. Marianandam, on 28th September. He served as the Lord's servant in the House of God, Kacheripeta, Kakinda, for more than three decades, besides in Godavari districts and in many places in and around Kakinada, for many years before that. A very large number of believers and servants were present at his funeral service, conducted by Bro. James Ambrose and co-workers. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. ..that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev.14:13). This has been the assurance of faith in which our Bro. V. Marianandam slept in the Lord suddenly after a heart attack. Let us pray for his two sons in the ministry, besides his daughter and wife. Also for the Lord's provision for the proper continuation of the work and ministry of the Lord in Kakinada and surrounding places.

Praying that abiding in the Vine, and in true life and love union with the Lord Jesus, our Head and heavenly Bridegroom, we may have the spiritual resources to serve His people effectively,

Eph. 4 : 1-3, 15, 16 , Col. 2 : 6;7,19 , Rom. 7 : 4,6.

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K. PHILLIP

A LIVING WELL -2

BAKHT SINGH

In Jer. 33:6 God promises "abundance of peace and truth". As we receive a greater revelation of God's truths, His ways and His laws, we are given abundance of peace. This revelation does not come to us from head-knowledge, or from extraordinary books. Our experience is often like that of students who learn by heart so much during their examination period but have no experience. They have knowledge for their examinations, but what they have acquired has not become theirs by personal experience. In the same way, many people are limited in their knowledge of God. They can talk about God's holiness and His grace, but they have no personal experience. Isaiah was able to say so clearly, "God is my salvation" (12:2), because in chapter six he had a definite personal experience of the holy God. He saw God's glory. He saw Him highly exalted and cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips"; and then with coals of fire his iniquity was put away. Then he was able to say joyfully, "I will... not be afraid" (12:2). He could trust God in every situation.

If we too have a definite experience of the living God, we ought to be free from every fear. Fear is a sin before God; fear and unbelief go together. Fear indicates a lack of faith, but the prophet says boldly: "I will trust and not be afraid", He says in implicit faith, "...the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my son he also is become my salvation". What a wonderful experience! The living Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who rose again and is living in us, is our strength.. "Christ who is our life" (Col. 3:4), is our strength. The life of the Lord Jesus Christ flowing into us, becomes our strength day by day. That is a heavenly song, a song which we can sing everywhere in every circumstance. If earthly trials take away our song, it shows that our strength is not in Christ, for true experience in the Lord Jesus Christ will help us to have a song.

The first part of the song given in Isaiah 12 is, "Praise the LORD" (v.4). Our hearts should be full of praise even in poverty, sickness, hardship, or in any other situation. The second part of the song is, "...call upon his name" or in other words.. "Proclaim His Name" (v.4). Thus our neighbours and friends will know the worth of the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot keep our salvation to ourselves; we must have a desire to share it with others. That is why we must proclaim that salvation in our schools, offices and neighbourhood; and the more we declare it, the more joy we will have.

The third part of the song is, "...declare his doings among the people" (v.4). By giving our testimony to His mighty acts in our own lives we declare His doings. It is not by giving sermons that we can convict people. We are to tell them how our Lord has done great things for us, how day by day He helps us, answers our prayers and gives us victory over all the desires of the flesh. It is the personal testimony to God's faithfulness that brings conviction.

The fourth part of the song is, "...make mention that his name is exalted" (v.4). We can say that our Lord has been exalted far above all, and His Name is above every other name. That is why every knee shall bow to Him, according to Phil.2: 10.

Fifthly, "Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth" (v.5). Following your example other people will begin to sing, till God's power is experienced among all nations, as they hear of the greatness of the Lord Jesus and come to Him.

Sixthly, "Cry out and shout. thou inhabitant of Zion" (v.6). Zion refers to the heavenly House which God is building, of which we are the living stones. We are saved for the purpose of building a spiritual House to proclaim God's fullness. Zion speaks of that heavenly House for our heavenly King. The tabernacle which Moses built in the wilderness and the temple which Solomon built were shadows only. A shadow can never give a true picture of the reality. So the writer to the Hebrews says that though the tabernacle built by Moses was so glorious and wonderful, and though it was built at God's command, it was only a shadow. It was not the true House of God (Heb. 3:5,6): It is we who are building the true House for God under the Lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every believer has a share in it, and it will not be complete till the Lord comes again. Now however, we can sing the Heavenly song that we who were once completely ruined by sin, have become living stones in order to become a part of God's glorious House for eternity.

(To be contd.)

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SUFFERING AND GLORY

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"
(Luke 24:26)

"Two disciples were on their way to Emmaus on the resurrection evening. They were sad as they discussed the things that had happened in Jerusalem concerning Jesus, Then the Lord Jesus Himself drew near and went with them; but their eyes were closed, so they could not recognize Him, They shared with Him the events that had taken place in Jerusalem. He rebuked them for their foolishness and slow understanding of the Scriptures and said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26). He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. From this we understand that Christ must suffer before entering into His glory. The Lord Jesus Christ passed through three places of suffering, Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha, We His disciples also must pass through these three places of suffering before we can enter into glory. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Pet, 5:10).

Gethsemane means oil press (Matt. 26:36). Our Lord Jesus Christ entered into this garden after having the Last Supper with His disciples. The Father in heaven gave Him the cup of suffering, sorrow and agony due to the sin of mankind. Naturally the Son of man shrank from it. He prayed to the Father with all humility saying, "o my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39). He prayed like this thrice and submitted Himself totally to the will of the Father and drank the cup.

Gethsemane speaks of dying to our self- will and submitting to the will of God implicitly, without any reasoning or questioning. Oil seeds are pressed in the press to take out oil and thereby they lose their shape, shining and identity. We believers have to learn to seek, know, and do the will of God at any cost. When we pray, many times we say "Lord, Lord", but we do not want to obey His commandments and do His will. When the Lord asked Ananias to go and meet Saul of Tarsus, he addressed the Lord Jesus as "Lord", but was not willing to do what He asked him to do. After a soft rebuke he obeyed the Lord (Acts 9:10-18). When Peter was asked to kill and eat all the creatures in a vessel that descended from heaven, he said, "Not so, Lord". Thrice he said "No" to the Lord's command and still addressed Him as "Lord" (Acts 10:9-16). Ananias was not willing to go to his enemy to give the Lord's message. Peter was not willing to go to the Gentiles who were regarded by the Jews as low class and low caste people. Later, both obeyed the Lord, Ananias at the cost of his safety and Peter

by killing his pride.

David out of his great love towards the ark of God, desired to build a House for the Lord. What a good and great desire-David had! But the Lord told him through the prophet Nathan that he should not build the House of God but his son, would build it. After hearing this, David sat in the presence of the Lord, worshipped Him and submitted joyfully to the will of God (1 Chro.17). He prepared all the material that was needed to build the House of God. Here we learn from the life of David that what we do for the Lord does, not matter so much, but doing the will of the Lord matters the most. Thus from Gethsemane we, learn to say, "... not as I will but as thou wilt" (Matt.26:39). Without this experience, we cannot go forward.

Gabbatha means a pavement or an even place (John 19:13). The Lord Jesus Christ was brought before Pilate by the Jews after their religious trials, accusing Him as a malefactor (John 18:30). The Lord did not open His mouth for all the accusations against Him. He did not defend Himself but committed Himself into the hand of God Who judges righteously (1 Pet.2:23). He said that His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36), and so did not fight for his rights. At Gabbatha, we learn the 'lesson of confessing orally and practically the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord, even at the cost of our lives. We should never deny the Name of Jesus Christ for the sake of worldly benefits, facilities and powers.

When Absalom rebelled and declared himself as the king of Israel, David did not fight for his right but committed himself into the hand of the Lord judges-righteously. He esteemed the city of Jerusalem as the place of the sanctuary of God. Also he was not willing to shed innocent blood and so even though he and his men were great warriors, he fled to the wilderness (2 Sam. 15:13-23). Because of that God promised King Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah that He would save the city for His Name's sake and for His servant David's sake (Isa.37:35). What a glorious honour to David! We learn from the life of David that we should not fight for our right of power and position in the local church. We should commit ourselves into the mighty hand of God Who judges righteously, and exalts us in His time (1 Pet. 5:5,6; 2:23).

Golgotha means the place of a skull. It was there the Lord Jesus was crucified (John 19: 17, 18). He was brought to the place of suffering, shame and mockery. While suffering in His body and soul, He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). The highest Christian virtue is to forgive others in the Name of Jesus Christ. It is a very difficult lesson to learn in a short period. Yet we must learn it in the school of salvation under the Principalship of the Holy Spirit. "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3: 13).

Joseph was envied, hated and sold by his brethren, yet he forgave them so that he might enjoy the presence of God in Egypt in the house of Potiphar and in prison also. Had he not forgiven his brethren, he would not have enjoyed the presence of God and exaltation by God. He understood that God was using all circumstances to fulfill His will through him (Rom. 8:28). That is why he forgave

his brethren, received them and nourished them (Gen.45:5; 50:15-21).

Stephen the first Christian martyr forgave his tormentors saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). These words pierced the heart of Saul a young Pharisee, who had consented to Stephen's death (Acts 8:1) and was guarding the clothes of witnesses (Acts 7:58). Forgiving and praying for one's enemies was astonishing to Saul. Perhaps the Holy Spirit's work of conviction began in his heart after hearing the forgiving prayer of Stephen. So at Golgotha we learn to forbear and forgive (Col. 3:13).

Christ suffered for us and left an example that we should walk in His footsteps, (1 Pet.2:21). Unless we pass through the experiences of Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha, we cannot enter into His glory. Dear reader, the Lord Jesus Christ suffered for your sins and entered into His glory. If you have not received Him as your personal Saviour right now repent of your sins and receive Him into your heart, so that He may receive you into His glory after your earthly pilgrimage.

P.C.R.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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October 21, 2005

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath begotten us to a lively hope by His resurrection from the dead, making us partakers of Himself and His heavenly calling, according to His eternal purpose. The Lord enable us to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Harkening unto the voice of the Holy Ghost our teacher!, comforter and guide, may we be enabled to remain-steadfast unto the end, lest we fall a prey to unbelief, in departing from the living God (1 Peter 1 :3; Heb.3:1,7,12,13;John 14:26; 16:13,14).

The heavenly calling has been made known to men of God and patriarchs of all ages, so to say, from the beginning. The earth having been a scene of divine disappointment, humanly speaking, and the elect being therefore strangers and sufferers in it, the heavens have been disclosed to them as their place of rest and inheritance. Abraham desired a heavenly country. Enoch was translated there. Moses lost the land of promise, but got the Pisgah of God. David confessed that he and all his fathers were strangers with God in the earth. Elijah among the prophets in the latter days of the Old Testament, as Enoch among the patriarchs in its earlier days, was taken to heaven. And thus the heavenly calling was held in constant remembrance and kept in view. And all the elect, in the Old Testament times. whether patriarchal, Mosaic, or prophetic, have no

doubt a part in the heavenly places. The lord calls them all by the term "children of resurrection" -and by that He teaches I,JS that they will be called to their inheritance by the resurrection from the dead. Then they will not, as He further teaches us, marry and give in marriage, as though they were children of the earth.

In the divine reasoning of the Epistle to the Galatians, they are alluded to and considered as standing in sonship and heirship with the elect now gathering. So in the Hebrews they are considered as perfected and sharers of the heavenly calling with us of this day. But the Ephesian Epistle never takes them up to associate them with the saints now gathering in the 'Body of Christ'. These distinctions are very significant, and they lead us to the conclusion that the Old Testament saints enjoyed the heavenly calling or the heavenly places as their home and their inheritance, though kept apart from the Church, the Body of Christ, and the Bride of Christ. We may assume this concerning them as follows.

Leaving the times of the Old Testament, times of patriarchs and prophets and having entered the New, we reach in due season the day of Pentecost. The Holy Ghost is then on the earth, upon the glorification of the Son of man in heaven. We find Him doing a work of "exceeding riches of grace" and which is to be to "the praise of the glory of God" in the ages to come. He is baptizing the election now gathering, into ONE BODY of which Christ is the Head -a BODY which is also called "the FULNESS of HIM that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1: 6, 12, 14, 23). And the whole HEAD and BODY together is called by an eminent wondrous title, "CHRIST"(1 Cor.12: 12).

Of course this election, thus forming the Body or fullness of Christ will with the Old Testament saints, have their place and inheritance in heaven. But while the Old Testament saints or brethren also have a share in the heavenly calling like the New Testament saints and brethren, the former will not be in the Body of Christ with them. When the Kingdom in its glorious form comes to be displayed, when "the world to come" is reached, the Old Testament saints will have "a name" there, and be as it were principalities and powers in heavenly places; but the election now gathering in the New Testament times and baptized into one body, will then be the "fullness" of Him Who sits above those principalities and powers and names, of Him Who "filleth all in all" (Eph. 1: 21-23).

These truths though they may sound strange, and Bible students may have different view points, should be prayerfully considered, and confirmed by His Spirit's work in us. We would go on to consider further. When all these have been translated to meet the Lord in the air, then the Old Testament and the New Testament together, as alike the "children of resurrection" will take their place in the heavens, as ordained to be theirs from the beginning. Then the action of the Apocalypse, from chapter 4 (Revelation) will begin. In the course of that action some saints of God will die as martyrs and such also will be taken to heaven, and there occupy their places as certain dignities and thrones a noble army or "a goodly fellowship we may say. But they will not be as part of the Body of Christ, with the election now gathering.

The saints of God who survive the great Judicial process of the book of Revelation, will form the seed, or the first fruits of the earthly people. Their calling is not heavenly. They have no part in the heavenly places. They begin to

fill and furnish the millennial earth; and to them as the first fruits will be gathered a harvest, till the whole face of the earth be fruitful -Jerusalem, the land of Israel, the people of Israel and the nations all the world over will constitute a scene of power and of government, and a sanctuary for the service of the God of heaven and earth. God would then display His Kingdom glories. And this Kingdom is the subject of notice in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, together with the judgments, which introduce it, and the glories, which give it its character. But the calling out of a Body for Him Who is the Head of that Kingdom, is not the subject of those Scriptures. It is called in an eminent sense "the Mystery" and is declared to have been "hid in God from the foundation of the world". Only now it has been revealed to the prophets of the New Testament. Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles was made the great vessel and depository of it, its special witness and minister. This he himself writes in detail in Eph. 3:1-10. May the Lord help us to know and be assured of the deep things of God in His heavenly calling ordained from the beginning for our glory.

Bro. M.G. Lingdong and his co-workers at Berachah, Gangtok, would have us to thank the Lord for the profitable time granted to them during their recent Holy Convocation. About 2,400 people attended from allover Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan, Assam and different parts of Darjeeling District. They covet our prayers for the follow-up work.

Bro. Danam, one of the responsible brothers at Beer-Sheba, Kadapa, covets our prayers for the comfort of his family members as his father Bro. John of Badwel was called to Glory on 21st October.

Praying that we may be enabled to study the Word of God, rightly dividing the Word of truth, to be workmen approved unto God, walking in the truth and worthy of our heavenly calling in Christ Jesus our Lord,

2tim. 1: 8-11, 2 Pet. 1: 9-11, 1 Pet. 2: 9.

I remain, Yours in His grace ,

K. PHILLIP,

A LIVING WELL -3 BAKHT SINGH

The seventh and the last part of the song in Isaiah 12 extols the Lord. "...great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee" (v.6}. In eternity we shall know God's true greatness; now we can talk about it, but we do not yet know fully how great He is.

In Isaiah 12:3 the prophet says, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation". Surely we all want to know how we can have that happy experience. If we do not have it, it is our fault, because we are careless and negligent and have no faith.

So the prophet says, "If you want such a heavenly song on your lips, then become a well of the living water of salvation". The woman at the well in John 4 was talking so proudly about the well. When the Lord Jesus offered her living water she said, "Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well...?" (v.12). She did not know that the Lord had come there to make her a better well than that well. The Lord wants us all to become good wells with plenty of water, living water for our neighbours, friends, relations and even our enemies. When Abraham's servant asked Rebekah for water for himself, she drew water not only for him, but also for all the camels. Now camels drink plenty of water; not only one tumbler, but many buckets of water. Yet Rebekah very gladly said, "I will draw water for your camels also". That is how our love should be. In Christ we have good water and plenty of it for everyone. Let them come to us at any part of the day or night and they can find water there. Has our life become such a well? Can we say truthfully that people have been coming to us day and night from all parts, and are being refreshed? How many there are who give out hatred, jealousy and bitterness wherever they go! They are like dry wells full of darkness, snakes and scorpions. Such have no right to be called a well at all. Others after a few years have no water left; they dry up. What kind of a well are you? What does God say about you when He sees your life?

Now let us see when and where that well was dug. It is said that Jacob dug that well in about 1039 B.C. In Genesis 31 Jacob was full of fear because he was trying to find happiness in earthly prosperity. He deceived his brother Esau and took away his birthright, thinking that thereby he would have a double portion of the property of his father. When Esau realized his loss he made a vow to kilt Jacob, and Jacob ran away and served twenty years in the house of his father-in-Law. He became very prosperous, but was not happy. Though he had much cattle and everything in plenty, he had no true happiness. His own father-in-Law deceived him ten times. So one day he took his family and goods and ran away from the house. But he was afraid how he was going to meet Esau who had wanted to kill him. On the way he stopped at night near the river Jabbok and there God met him. Though God had appeared to him in a dream twenty years before, Jacob had no real experience of God. He had only seen in a dream a ladder joining heaven and earth, but he had no personal experience of Him. He was thinking only of earthly prosperity and to that end he made a vow (Gen. 28:20). He was thinking only of food and raiment and safety. So his prayer was, "Lord, give me food and raiment, and protect me from danger; then you will be my God". But after twenty years of hardship he discovered that none of those things made him happy. What we cannot learn through meetings or books, we learn through sufferings; and that is why God permits in our lives many many painful trials.

In Genesis 32:26 Jacob said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me". According to Psa. 133:3, real blessing is everlasting life. God answered Jacob's prayer, gave him a new name -Israel, and he became anew person and a prince with God. (To be contd.)

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