

# Hebron Messenger

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## REACHING CAPERNAUM

(John 6:15-21)

"Apprehending that for which we were apprehended" (See Phil 3: 12)

"Grasping THE PURPOSE for which Christ grasped me" (J.B. Phillips)

The miracle of Christ walking on the sea to rescue His troubled and toiling disciples is the fifth of the eight "sign-miracles" described in John's Gospel. It is interesting to note that John never used the word "dunamis" (act of power) in his record; -it is consistently "semeion" (i.e. "sign"), something that signifies, or illustrates, something else. It has its own hidden meaning, and is intended, not only as factual history, but also for interpretation, as also are the parables. It is good to go through John's eight miracles with that in mind, and seeking to find the corresponding "significance" in each case.

The miracle we now have in mind is a beautiful example of that. Christ and His disciples had had a demanding day, -including "feeding the five thousand", and, at its close, Christ Himself "went up into a mountain to pray" (John 6: 15; Mark 6:46); -and wanting to be alone with God during the night hours. He briefly told His disciples to make their own way home by ship, -i.e. "toward Capernaum" (John 6:17). They started off, but soon came the terrible and violent storm, -and the great anguish and torment of the distressed disciples. But, high on the mountain, Christ had evidently been watching the storm, -so came down and WALKED OVER THE WAVES to show Himself to them, and to rescue them. It was then they "willingly received him into the ship: -and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went" (John 6:21). They had "apprehended that for which they had been apprehended"; -they had reached the goal!

We suggest that that phrase "apprehending that for which we are apprehended" (Phil.3: 12) provides us with the key to the inner significance of the miracle, -and we shall try now to trace it through. We believe it can show us how we can "reach the goal", -how we can GRASP the purpose for which Christ GRASPED us. This was something that Paul greatly wanted, and for which he was prepared to "count all things but loss" (Phil.3:8).

Perhaps we can now suggest a succession of stages in the miracle itself, and seeking to note the spiritual counterpart in each case.

First, then, we note that when the disciples got into the boat they KNEW WHERE THEY WERE GOING. The Lord had said, "Capernaum", -and Capernaum it would be. They knew the planned destination, and they were actively committed to it. The Lord's plan was to be their plan.

The same, we believe, must be true of us. We, too, must know, and accept at least the rudiments of the Lord's plan for His people, and for His Church, -and we must be committed to it. We must "set sail" in that direction. It is so important to ask ourselves, "Do we know what the Lord has in mind for His blood-bought people?" We obviously cannot know all, but we do need to have at least the broad outline, and to be committed to it, -actively. We must "set sail" in that direction.

How we thank God that He has revealed these plans and purposes in His own precious Word, -as much as it is good for us to know of them -at present. The question is, have we "searched the Scriptures" to find out those purposes! Perhaps we could give a few examples of what the Scripture say. Here they are. God has plans to:-

Make His people accurate reflections of His Son (Rom.8: 29).

Make us sharers of Christ's authority, -even now (Matt.16: 19; 18:18).

Make Christians His own "place of rest" (2 Cor.6: 16; Isa.66: 1,2).

Have us LOVE CHRIST as He does (John 17:26; Rom.5: 5).

These are only a few examples, but sufficient, perhaps, to make us "get into the boat and set out for Capernaum", -whatever it may cost.

We can, of course, thank God that all these things are also the inheritance of Christians from the moment of New

Birth, -they already HAVE ALL in Christ. What we are thinking of here, however, is the EXPERIENTIAL ENJOYMENT OF THEM, -RIGHT NOW, -to the extent to which that is possible, -and intended. All that, of course, will be progressive, and it is that "progression" which we are now considering. And we are saying that the first step in that progression is to be aware of the intended destination- (Capernaum), -and to be committed to it. Thank God, the disciples straightway "entered into the ship and went over the sea toward Capernaum" (John 6:17).

The next thing we notice in our story is what we can call, "THE ARISING OF A GREAT STORM", or "THE EMERGING OF GREAT ANTAGONISM". We read, "And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew" (v.18). It is interesting that both Matthew and Mark tell us that "the wind was contrary"; -it was in sharp opposition to them, -something quite significant. We also read that the ship itself was positively "tossed with the waves" (Matt. 14:24); -certainly a most frightening situation!

Turning immediately to the spiritual parallel, we are reminded of such verses as Ephesians 6:12, -"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but AGAINST PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS, AGAINST 'WICKED SPIRITS' (marg.) IN HIGH PLACES". As for the "great wind", Ephesians 2:2 also tells us that Satan is "the prince of the power of the air"; -hence, no doubt, the storm, and the awful opposition to the disciples.

The lesson for us here, then, must be very obvious. Anyone, or any group, that sets its heart on spiritual fullness WILL INEVITABLY ENCOUNTER SATANIC RESISTANCE AND HELLISH RAGE. If we are quite content with mere "beginnings", we shall know little of this adversity, but, if our hearts are truly set on the divine purpose, the GREAT WIND will surely ARISE AGAINST US! And a "contrary" wind it surely will be; -it will have NOTHING of the Divine plan. Our ship, too, will be "TOSSED with the wind" and we may even regret that we ever started such a voyage. How good, then, to have this pictorial warning from the Scriptures! And, in God's own love and wisdom, the deliverance may NOT be immediate! The Lord may have a few more lessons to teach us IN THE STORM! He knows the way we take.

(To be contd.)

C.R.G.

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### LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

Hebron  
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29-1-2002

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the mighty and matchless Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, our Counsellor, everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace, even the Prince of the kings of the earth, to Whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever (Isa.9: 6; Rev.1: 5,6).

As we have entered into the New Year, we would take this opportunity to thank all our friends and fellow-believers, and regular readers and subscribers, for their prayers and contributions for the maintenance of this small written ministry of the Word of God. We would covet your continued prayers for the publisher and editor and all those who contribute the articles. Also let us thank the Lord for all who are engaged in the work of translation into Telugu and Hindi, besides the editing and printing, dispatch and maintenance of accounts etc. Pray that they and some more be inspired and encouraged to continue in their good work.

At the same time make sure that your addresses are correctly given and your subscriptions paid up to date. In this connection it is possible that since you have access to our website mentioned at the end, you may not be wanting a copy to be sent to you by post. In case we do not get a reply to the reminder sent to you for subscriptions due, we take for granted that you do not want us to continue your name on our mailing list.

The reports we have had tell us that the ministry in the Youth Camps held at various assemblies of the land from north to south, have been well attended, several hundreds, even at El-Shaddai, Kalimpong. The response was good and it is our duty to pray for all who came under the sound of the Word and submitted to it, as unto the Lord

that they may "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ", as Apostle Peter concludes in his second epistle (2 Pet.3: 18).

We shall continue with the 6th chapter of Daniel and conclude our meditations on, "Being counted worthy for the Kingdom". Chapter 6 describes an incident, which came towards the end of the prophet's long life. In actual chronological placing, it seems to follow chapter 9, the chapter that deals with Daniel's intercessory prayer for the restoration of Jerusalem. Doubtless the original time of humbling, confession and intercession was costly to Daniel. Such prayer is always costly. Yet, as is often the case, the severest test came afterwards as Daniel with his windows "...open towards Jerusalem" sought three times a day to continue steadfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving (Col.4:2). Satan was determined to close that mouth, or at any rate to close those windows and it was he who instigated the clever plot against Daniel with this end in view.

The plot failed. The prayer went on and Daniel lived to see the answer in the reign of Cyrus (v.28). This was done not by any earthly position, which Daniel held, but solely by his spiritual authority, as a man in touch with the heavenly Throne. In his early life, he had been delivered from temptation by a fixed heart-determination to be true to his God. In his old age he was again delivered by the same set ness of purpose. He kept his eyes on the divine purpose, and the Lord looked after him.

There is something deeply moving about his dignified ignoring of his enemies as he "prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (v.10). To his friends it must have seemed rather pathetic. What was one weak, lonely, old man against "the law of Medes and Persians, which altereth not"(v.8)? Darius himself spent a miserable day and a worse night worrying about it. Daniel did not seem to have worried at all. He knew of a power greater than the law of the Medes and Persians -the power of the Name used as a weapon in prevailing prayer. Those windows opened towards Jerusalem, were never closed. Daniel never yielded. The Medeo-Persian empire had to yield, the hungry lions had to yield, and all the enemies had to yield, but he stood firm and triumphed in simple faith.

This is the final picture given to us of one who was promised a place in the Kingdom (12:13). We see him now not as a prince of the seed royal, not as a leader, a seer, a public figure, a counsellor of kings, but just as a simple man -a man looking on in faith to the divine objective, a man beset by many foes; but a man on his knees, a man convinced -of the supreme importance of prayer. This is the kind of man we all can be or must be -the kind we must be if we are to count for God. There are no dens of lions in our day, but there are many fierce and determined attempts to silence prevailing prayer. Big issues in the Kingdom may be decided by whether we capitulate or whether we win through. Thank God, the "God of Daniel" (v.26) is still with us, as "the Lord that reigneth" (Psalm 93:1,97:1,99:1). May we endeavour by grace to keep ourselves in the victory and value and virtues of His reign -even our Lord Jesus, "King eternal, immortal and invisible"(1Tim.1: 17).

Please pray for the Lord's plan, as Bro.Paul Sudhakar has been invited to have a week's ministry in Singapore, mainly amongst our believers from India in the second week of February, God willing. Also remember Bro.Eddy Williams in Syracuse and few assemblies in U.S.A. Continue to pray for Bro. T. E.Koshy for his health and as he gets ready for his visit to Thailand by the second week of February, God willing.

Pray for Bro. Rajkumar (son of Bro.D.B.Rao, Hebron Fellowship, in Mumbai as he was united with Sis. Prasanna (daughter of Mr. Nanaji, Eluru). The marriage was solemnised in the presence of many saints and servants and others at Vijayawada on the 25th of January.

Thank the Lord for enabling Bro.George Lonen of Cardiff to be in India since 12th January, fellowshipping with the assemblies and sharing in the ministry, beginning at Jehovah-Shammah, Chennai and then on to Horeb, Malakpet, Hyderabad, besides Pune, Bangalore, and Trivandrum. He covets our prayers for the little flock in Cardiff, besides those in London amongst whom also he shares ministry from time to time.

Pray for the recovery of Sis. (Mrs.) Persis Kanthiah Caleb as she had to undergo Thyroid operation a few weeks ago and is still weak. Also for our brother weakened by high Diabetes, labouring at Horeb, Nagercoil.

Praying that we all be enabled to walk worthy of God, Who hath called us unto His Kingdom and glory,

I remain yours in His grace,  
K. PHILLIP

2 Thess. 1 .5, 11, 12 ; Psalm 22 .27,28 ; 1 Tim. 1 .17-19

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## MY JOY MIGHT REMAIN IN YOU —2

### BAKHT SINGH

In 1 Peter 1: 8, Peter calls that joy "unspeakable and full of glory". That joy cannot be explained. You may be a very good speaker and a preacher. But this joy unspeakable cannot be explained. We need a heavenly vision to see that joy which is "full of glory". It lifts us from the earth to heaven itself.

Then, that joy does not depend upon eating and drinking. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom.14: 17). Most of our joy depends upon eating and drinking. That is how we find many wives making mistakes. They think, they will be loved by their husbands for good food and drinks. In the beginning of their married lives, they spend many hours thinking and planning what to cook for their husbands. They know what they like and yet they are not satisfied. You find that they are disappointed. This joy, which the Lord gives, is of a different nature. The joy that comes by eating and drinking is of a different nature. You may try one day with a good intention, but that joy will not last long. Some people are not particular about eating and drinking, but they are after property and possessions. They go on saving money with the intention of purchasing land, building and property; others amass wealth or cattle or sheep or diamonds or: jewels. None of these things can give you true joy, even though you may possess whatever you long for.

If you go to Denmark, you will not find any poor man there; everyone is prosperous. No one is unemployed. Every one has a good job. They have a wonderful sanatorium, but no patients. Yet, in Denmark with all their knowledge, skillfulness and prosperity, they have a larger number of suicides than anywhere else in the world. Every day, you find young people and old committing suicide. That happens everywhere, because they depend upon their possessions for their happiness, so they are disappointed. But in Habakkuk 3:17, 18 the prophet says, " Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation". Even though we lose everything, which we possess, yet we can rejoice in the Lord. That is true joy. There is a joy, which does not depend upon land or buildings or prosperity, or any kind of wealth or possessions. Have you found that joy? It is to give us such a joy; the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world. So lovingly He is offering that joy to all people in any part of the world. See Phil.4: 4! 'Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice". "Rejoice ever more" (1Thess.5: 16). Whether you have good health or bad health, whether you have many friends or enemies, whether you are in your own home or away from home, that joy will not leave you. There are many people who become homesick. They shed tears when they think of their homes. They lose their appetite, sleep and everything. They are very miserable. They go on sighing day and night. They think that their joy depends only upon their home. This joy is not like that. In home or away from home, in the midst of enemies or friends, job or no job, children or no children, this joy is there.

(To be contd.)

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