

Hebron Messenger

Published Fortnightly

VOI. XL

MAY 5, 2002

NO.9

THE FAMILY ALTAR - 5

For the sake of those, who may now be exercised about actual details, we would suggest the following as guiding principles for family prayers.

1) Let it be clearly understood that we are NOT here referring to a weekly meeting in the home, for instance. That is quite another matter, and is NOT to be confused with what we are here proposing. We ONLY have in mind the daily, and much simpler, occasion for the reading of the Word of God together, during the course of the morning meal, for instance. This other matter of a weekly family meeting is altogether different, and, we would say, fraught with extra difficulties. The members of the family are probably overloaded with meetings, and the very thought of yet another, creates reactions, and may be more than God is asking of them. Family Prayers are different from "meetings", and helpful co-operation is more easily secured for the brief occasion, as they start out for the day.

2) Let the time be IN THE MORNING if at all possible. Do not settle for an evening alternative UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. One of the main objects is to enable the family to anticipate the COMING day together, under the Lordship of Christ, and to encourage them to face the various responsibilities that await them as "in the Spirit", and in happy fellowship together. And, apart from all else, Christ deserves the best time of the day, for in ALL things He must have the preeminence. (Col.1:18).

3) Make use of the morning mealtime if you can, having the reading while the family is seated at the table, either before, or after, the meal. This simple plan saves a lot of extra organising and a lot of effort, too, in gathering the family from various directions and occupations. At the mealtime they are already gathered and the opportunity is there!

Of course, many families do not have the morning meal together, and some other arrangement may NEED to be made. But, we repeat, work for this better and easier way IF YOU CAN. Many families COULD eat together if certain sacrifices were made, and if wholesome discipline were obtaining through the family. Some who conceivably COULD sleep longer may NEED to rise a little earlier in order to take the family meal together. The extra time is not lost in any case, and good use can be made of it when the meal is over and family prayers completed. In fact, in many cases, it could prove a very great advantage to be up a little earlier than has been wont, and children, particularly, will soon come to appreciate the extra time available and to make good use of it. Incidentally, the warnings of Proverbs 6:9, 10 and Proverbs 24:33,34 could well be taken to heart in many of our Christian families who genuinely "mean business" in the things of the Lord!

The earlier start, of course, may also necessitate something of a curtailing of unnecessary indulgences the previous night, and strong leadership and wise parenthood in these things is, no doubt, a tremendous factor. We need to settle it, that, if we want blessing, there must be order, and leaders have to pay a price for this.

4) Let the time used for the Family Prayers be very brief. Seven to ten minutes are usually quite sufficient, and the shorter time gets better support from the family, and better results, too, than something unnecessarily prolonged. This is specially so when children and others are eager to get started with their busy programme for the day. A Christian parent will show loving understanding in these things, always being as co-operative as is possible, consistent with the interests of the Lord.

5) Let the head of the house ask for complete quietness while he reads, say, fifteen or twenty verses from the Word of God, and then makes, perhaps, the very briefest of comments. In this way the family can go right through a suitable book, such as one of the Gospels, or the Psalms, or Proverbs, and, later on, other books, as the Lord shall lead. Even reading without comment is sure to bring a blessing, for the Book held in the hand is itself the dynamic and faith-creating Word of God. (Rom. 10:17).

6) After this brief reading, let all kneel down together, if at all possible, while the head of the house commits the family to the care and keeping of the Lord for the day to come, and brings some word of praise for mercies and blessings hitherto received. Friends and relations can also be remembered, and any special needs of which the

family may be aware at any given time. These could include sicknesses or other problems, and we may mention that children are often helped by a brief but sincere remembrance of their school examinations, and such like matters. All is shared together, and all is spread before the Lord in simple, trusting, faith. Let the focus of the prayer be on the Living Christ Himself, that all may become freshly mindful of HIM, and of His great love and mercy. Such a family rises from its knees, immensely strengthened, and those who meet them, through the day, will quickly recognize it.

7) It is sometimes helpful to make a slight change on the Sunday morning, such as including a song or taking the reading from a different part of the Bible, or even getting one of the children to do the actual reading of the Scriptures in the hearing of the others. A little variety of this kind helps to offset any lurking tendency to monotony and is often helpful in many ways.

8) Do not regard Family Prayers as a substitute for individual "Quiet Time" or "Personal Devotions". The individual time with the Lord must always be encouraged and is a basic principle of progress.

9) In ALL the matters we have mentioned: let the head of the house seek, for himself, a deepening godliness of character. Children are often quick and accurate in assessing the moral and spiritual qualities of parenthood, if the family exercise is to be appreciated and effective, it is basic that the head of the house be genuinely honoured and respected by all the family. He must be known as one who sincerely seeks the glory of the Lord, and who, in the home and out of it, does always those things that please Him (John 8:29). It cannot be overstressed, that, inconsistencies there, can rob the whole occasion of its usefulness; in fact they can build up resentments and cause great harm. Notice that, in these respects, "The Family Altar" becomes a constant challenge to the head of the house, and provides an ever-present provocation to still more godliness. This is another bi-product of the exercise!

All the above suggestions, we believe, can be helpful to those who are now personally concerned about this matter, and who desire to see this "Family Altar" established in their homes. The best advice, however, is just to make a start. IN TRUE DEPENDENCE ON THE LORD, and being constantly alive, in Him, for counsel and direction. Simplicity and spontaneity are the "greatest assets, and we can surely approach this matter knowing that the Lord wants it to be, in every way, a joy, and not a burden. Let the Spirit be Lord, and let there be liberty (2 Cor. 3:17).

"Family Prayers" are a wonderful way to honour the Lord as He should be honoured, and, as we have said, infinite gains will follow. By this simple practice, the spiritual is given the place of prominence and priority, which rightly belongs to it. A new "atmosphere" is progressively apparent in the home, and a sense of "the opened heaven". The whole "level of living" becomes elevated, and Christian character begins to grow apace. Often, it is only years afterwards that the benefits will be fully recognized and assessed, but, **that they will be there, all in due time, there can be no doubt.** Thus will the heart be gladdened, and the Lord glorified, -for "He is faithful".

We would urge all who have read these paragraphs, to seek the Lord about this matter; specially those who have responsibility for the spiritual guidance of a Christian home. We are sure that what is written enshrines a vital secret which can be of untold blessing to us, and to our children, and, as we have said, it will leave its mark of blessing, too, on the fuller Family Gathering of the local church. Best of all, it will surely affect that Final Family Gathering, up in Heaven, of the whole "household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). Around that Throne, please God, may our children be brought up faithfully in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. All this will greatly magnify our Lord, and that, of course, is the single end in view.

"AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD" (Josh. 24:15).

(Concluded)

C.R.G.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

Hebron
Golconda Crossroads,
Hyderabad -500 020,
A.P. India.
Telephone No: 7613066

24-4-2002

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father" (Rev.1 :5,6). His priestly prayer as portrayed. In John 17:24 reveals His great desire that, those who have been given to Him by the Father, may be "with HIM" where He is and behold His glory. This glory is linked with His own holy ones of whom it is said, "they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20'6),

The motto text for the year reminds that, "The Lord (Jesus Christ) reigneth" and that, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (Psa. 99:1 ; 2 Tim. 2:12). We may consider the little expression "with Christ", through the Spirit. It sets before us the potentialities of the higher life, as it comes from the pen of the great Apostle Paul, in his Colossian letter chapter 3.

If we are to share the rich, full life of Christ Himself, we must make sure that we are "WITH HIM", That is what it means to be a disciple. Mark tells that Jesus appointed twelve to be with Him (Mark 3: 14). And at the last supper the Lord could look round the table and say, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations" (Luke 22:28). To be with Christ is the key to discipleship, and devotional surrender, for all acceptable service, with its true reward.

The first four verses of Colossians 3, can be rewritten as follows. You have been raised with Christ. You have died and your life's hid with Christ in God. When Christ Who is our life appears, then ye will also appear with Him in glory. "WITH CHRIST"- there is the secret. Let us look at these three aspects of "life with Christ".

In the first place the believer has been raised with Christ. RAISED with CHRIST. That is the past reference of these verses, something which has already happened. "You have been raised with Christ". The believer shares Christ's resurrection. Back in 2:12 Paul reminded his readers that they have been raised with Christ, through faith in the working of God Who raised Him from the dead. If indeed they have been raised like this, then Paul argues, that they must lead a risen life. This is made possible by Christ Himself, Who is our life. For resurrection living there is resurrection power.

The risen life with Christ is connected with things that are above. Notice how the phrase comes twice in verse 1 and again in verse 2. It refers to that which belongs to God. The call here is to concentrate on God Himself; to subordinate our life to Him, to seek and find Him in everything. Note what believers are expected to do with respect to things above. Underline SEEK in verse 1 and SET in verse 2, -SEEK and SET. There is the attitude that leads to the higher life, the upward call of God in Christ Jesus for us.

SEEK is a present imperative. To seek and keep on seeking -"reach out for the highest gifts of heaven." This is the nature of the ongoing saints' life. We are to be seekers ever. Our seeking does not end when we are saved. When we have sought, and found Christ, because He first sought and found US, then we are to seek what is above. Thus I to be a seeker is to emerge as a finder, humble and ; satisfied, by the Lord Himself.

The heretics that troubled the church at Colosse evidently taught that spiritual emancipation! can only be achieved by rigorous ascetics and through intervention of angelic beings (Col.2.18). But Paul points to the one and only way in which, the goal can be reached -that is, through union with Christ Himself in His resurrection. This exalts the believer without any intermediary to the very height of heaven itself- "Where Christ is seated at the right hand of God". That is the focus of aspiration that governs the saint. The glorious ascension of the Lord assures us that where the Master is there one day His servants will be, as He promised. But even now we can reach out for heaven's gifts and enjoy-this glory begun below.

The next related command is "SET". Keep on setting your minds "on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth" (v.2). Commentators say, "You must not only seek heaven but think heaven". Lord helping, we shall continue in our next issue the other aspects of being "With Christ".

With a sense of sorrow and loss we mention here, the promotion to Glory of God's servant Bro. Kanthaiah Caleb, of Horeb, Nagercoil, on 11th April. He succumbed to a massive heart attack while enroute to Madras by train, taking his wife, Sis. (Mrs.) Persis Kanthaiah for medical consultation after her Thyroid operation at Nagercoil. The saddest part of it is that they returned to Horeb, Nagercoil, with his body in a van. The funeral was conducted on 12th April with many saints and servants from Tinnevely, Trichy, Alladipatti etc. These were the scenes of his labour Over the past thirty years or so as an evangelist and teacher of the Word of God in association with us all" He finished his course at Horeb, Nagercoil taking heed to the ministry he had received in the Lord and fulfilled it for the past three years (Col. 4:17). Let us pray earnestly for the comfort and recovery of health of Sis. (Mrs.) Kanthaiah Caleb, undergoing radiation therapy and also for her children.

Also please pray for the comfort of Bro. Amos, God's servant at Hyathnagar, Hyderabad, (son of Bro. Gabriel, God's servant at Thermal), as his young wife Sis.(Mrs.)Mary Sujatha was suddenly promoted to Glory on the 22nd of April, leaving behind two small children.

Pray for the Annual Youth Camp at Hebron, Hyderabad, God willing to be held from 21st to 26th of May 2002. May we remind you that these meetings are meant only for the young people from 15 years and upwards. Parents and mothers with children and older ones will not be allowed, as this is not a special gathering for all.

Praying that we may experientially enter into the provisions and privileges of being "WITH CHRIST", and suffer if need be, to be qualified to reign with Him,

I remain yours in His grace,
K. PHILLIP

2 Cor 4: 16-18; 2 Cor 1: 3-5; 1 Pet 2: 9, 21

I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD BAKHT SINGH

Scripture Reading: John 16: 1-33

In John's Gospel chapters 14-16 we have the last message of the Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples, before His crucifixion. This is a very important message. We find much inspiration and instruction by hearing and reading these words over and over again. Please read these chapters on your knees when you are discouraged or defeated. Again, if you want to know the secret of a triumphant life. read the same chapters. These three chapters can be summed up in three small fragments. In chapter 14, our Lord spoke of "My peace", in chapter 15 He spoke of "My joy", and in chapter 16, He spoke of "My victory". We have already considered the first two points in our previous issues.

Now we see from the last part of verse 33 of John 16 that our Lord wants us to enjoy His victory. All of us can enjoy that victory. By that victory, we can overcome our trials, tribulations, hardships and sufferings. In the same way, we can be saved from all our dangers, and eventually become immortal. We can overcome every limitation and every bondage of any kind. It is a unique victory. Our Lord wants us to have that victory in our lives daily. Now let us see the testimony of one who had enjoyed that victory. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8:35- 37). There are seven obstacles which Paul overcame: 1) tribulation, 2) distress, 3) persecution, 4) famine, 5) nakedness, 6) peril, and 7) sword. Paul said, "We are killed all the day long". That means, he had to face every imaginable suffering, distress and temptation. All these we can overcome, and become more than conquerors. What a 'wonderful victory! Don't think that these words are meant only for a few men like Paul the Apostle who wrote this. That is for you and for me also. This victory is for all of us, and we must be able to enjoy that victory every day.

When our Lord first told the disciples how He would be crucified and rise again, they were very very sad, puzzled and perplexed, so much so, Simon Peter rebuked the Lord at that time.

(To be contd.)

Crossroads, Hyderabad -500 020. Edited by Bro. K. Phillip, Printed and Published by Bro. G. T. Benjamin for
Hebron, Golconda
Crossroads, Hyderabad -500020

Hebron Messenger

Published Fortnightly

VOI. XL

MAY 19, 2002

NO.10

I JOHN... YOUR BROTHER (Rev. 1: 9)

In these end times no other book in the Scriptures assumes as much significance as the book of Revelation. While the world looks upon the future with horror, the Bible -taught Christian awaits delightfully the return of his Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. The events of September 11, 2001 and more recently that of December 13, 2001 have sent shockwaves through the length and breadth of this country. In this darkest hour the Christian waits for the Dawn -the thousand-year rule of Christ when "peace and righteousness" will reign over the nations.

Twenty centuries ago, Domitian, the Roman infidel banished John the apostle to Patmos, a deserted island. Thrown into hostile surroundings and cut off from all public spoken ministry, John must have spent his days and months in desperation. God, however, did not allow that to happen. God turned that very adversity into an advantage. It is a pleasure and privilege working with God. With God nothing runs on loss. Be it banishment or imprisonment, poverty or physical infirmity- "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom.8: 28). Confined to a prison cell Paul wrote to believers at Philippi, "I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Phil.1: 12). God takes the worldly -wise "in their own craftiness" (Job 5:13) and tempers devil -engineered human anger to His own praise. "Surely" Asaph tells us in Psa. 76: 10, "the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain".

The blood of martyrs in ages past was meant to bury the faith of the Bible and Christ of the cross. As the opposing wind currents enable every, kite to fly higher, God always uses the desolations of the enemy for His own cause! The past twenty centuries of Church history have seen enemies rising and falling. The Church militant strides triumphantly. Gamaliel's wisdom is yet to be proved wrong for he said to the persecutors of the church, "if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it" (Acts 5:39).

The Roman Emperor could shut out from John, all human company and comfort. Yet, his armies could not prevent one visitor -Christ and His gracious ministrations! Did not Christ tell John and the other disciples, "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be"? (John 12:26). In Christian service, Christ takes us where He Himself goes. We not only work for our Master but we work with our Master. In the genealogy of Judah we read about the potters who "dwelt with the king for his work" (1 Chro.4: 23). Elijah's conviction and courage was born out of this inseparable union with his Master. He said, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years " (1 Kings 17:1). It is a solemn truth then, where Christ sends us; there He goes with us. Christ Himself enjoyed this inseparable union with His Father in His earthly service. He said, "He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29).

Christ may sometimes withdraw all human company and consolation only to this end that we may enjoy and experience Him in a fuller measure. The discloser of all end -time events, written for our profit today, is the direct result of such a divine visitation. Despite receiving such visions and revelations, John remains clothed in humility: He introduces himself in Rev. 1: 9 as "I John,...who also am your brother...".

As the only surviving apostle he had everything to boast of. His apostleship, intimacy with Christ in earthly ministry, maturity, visions and revelations were his exclusive privileges. Yet he rejoiced in the simple fact that he was a brother in the family of many brethren. God was pleased to use apostle Paul as an international, itinerant evangelist. He alone was transported to the third heaven. We would be at a great loss if God would not have revealed many truths to Paul. Yet, writing to Corinthians Paul wrote, "ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor.4:5). Paul loved to call himself a Doulos, a slave (Rom.1: 1; Phil.1: 1 ; Tit.1 : 1) and also a prisoner of Jesus Christ (Philemon 1). His reference to himself at other times as "an apostle"- nearly 8 times- (1Cor.1: 1; 2 Cor.1: 1; Gal.1:1; Eph.1:1; Col.1:1; 1 Tim.1:1; 2 Tim.1 :1; Tit.1 :1) was used out of necessity to authenticate his message which depended on the genuineness of his calling. John the Baptist follow this holy company to confess, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (John 1: 23).

The endearing term "brother" is a family word. It links us at once to the brotherhood of all believers. Peter tells us to "love the brotherhood" (1 Pet.2: 17). Why should Peter tell us to do something that we all obviously know? Though adopted into the royal family of God we often face inter- personal problems. Think of Joseph and the events, which led to the happening as recorded in Genesis 45. Joseph was envied and hated. He suffered cruelty, ingratitude from the hands of his brothers. They sought to kill him. He was sold as a slave into Egypt. God sovereignty engineered the circumstances for Joseph's advantage. God allowed men to walk over his head. Joseph was taken through fire and through water but God brought him into a wealthy place (Psa.66:12). After years of separation, the very brothers of Joseph were entered into his presence. They could not recognize in the ruler, the slave -turned premier. Joseph tried for sometime to hide his identity but he could not do it any more. The Bible says that Joseph could not refrain himself from weeping. He commanded every Egyptian to leave his presence. "Cause every man to go out from me". Who are these? These are the Egyptians who received and elevated him in their palace. They were in constant service attending on him. Yet they could never be a part of his intimate brotherhood, such a privilege belonged to Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Zebulun, Issachar, Naphtali, Gad, Asher and Dan. What made Joseph to long for fellowship of these his enemies? Just this -the fatherhood of Jacob, his father. Joseph remembered his beloved father and poured out his love to his brothers who deserved no mercy. How often Israel would later annoy and anger God Jehovah! Yet, He would not destroy them for the sake of Abraham, His friend. How heart -rending are the words of God spoken through Hosea the prophet in Hos.11: 7-9! "And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim".

Admah and Zeboim are two places destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah according to Deut.29: 23. God would not give up Ephraim or Israel. Joseph would not give up his brothers. How tender are the words of the risen Christ to Mary Magdalene in John 20: 17, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God!" Who are these brethren? The disciples who were deserters were His brethren. Thomas the doubter, Peter, the one who denied thrice, and the rest who ran away, composed His team; Christ pursued them. He would not give them up. That is the spirit of Christian brotherhood. Peter has failed much. It is unthinkable that a man who confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" should later say "I know not the man". Peter not only failed the Lord but failed in the brotherhood.

He quickly condemned others while commending himself. He said, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will never be offended" (Matt.26: 33). His loud protestations of love proved false. Even after meeting the risen Lord, he went back to his old trade, fishing. His retreat was not quiet and secretive but public and contagious. He dragged six others with him (John 21). God restored him. Thirty -three years after this restoration he wrote his first epistle. In 1 Pet.1: 22 he says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently".

Peter began saying in 1 Pet.1: 2, about the purpose of sanctification, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience...". Twenty verses later he comes back to the subject of purification. Why? To emphasise the need of loving the brethren. "Obedience to God, unfeigned love towards brethren". May it adorn us for His glory. What is impossible in our natural state is possible with God. Christ died on the cross to bring in this transformation to any repentant sinner. Call on Him today. (To be Contd.) P.S

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

Hebron
Golconda Crossroads,
Hyderabad -500 020,
A.P. India.
Telephone No: 7613066

3-5-2002

Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

May His Name be praised and adored even the Name of the only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath in His infinite mercy quickened us together with Him, and hath raised us up together and hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Him. Saved by His grace we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them -seeking the things above and setting our minds on things above (Eph.2: 5,6, 10; Col. 3:1-3).

In continuation of our thoughts, as from Col.3: 1-4 beginning from our last issue -beginning with our being RAISED with Christ, we are to continue seeking things heavenly, setting our minds on things heavenly. In this permissive age of increasing ungodliness and lawlessness, when the novelist, journalist, humanist and sensualist all join to fix our minds on the filth of the earth, how increasingly essential and indispensable for the believers to lift their thoughts to things above. We should be most careful not only to exclude such sensual devilish images from our own minds, but also avoid arousing them in others, even by the slightest reference. Here lies the secret of consecration. We have to realise that we have been raised with Christ, and must go on looking to Him. That is what Moody the famous evangelist meant, when he said that the heart of consecration lies in CONCENTRATION.

In verse 3 of Colossians three Paul speaks that the life of the believer is HIDDEN with CHRIST. That is the present reference to this sequence. Here is how things are now. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God". The believer shares Christ's ascension. Christ is no longer seen by men. He was taken up into, heaven. There He sits at God's right hand. Thus, we who are with Christ, even now enjoy the bliss of heaven below.

But this can only happen to those who first of all have shared Christ's death. That is what Paul stresses at the beginning of the verse. In chapter 2 he has told the Colossians that they were buried with Christ in baptism (2:12). What that testimony symbolises is realised in the experience of the believer. It is the necessary condition for full consecration. That is what the man of God Oswald Chambers used to call -"the death side of sanctification". Until I die, my life cannot be hidden with Christ. Self will keep popping up again. The self so subtle in us all, can be proud of its learning, reputation, eloquence, leadership, applause and acceptance of the crowds that may listen to us. But it has to die with Christ, for a real step to blessing for evermore.

Only then, can we gain the privilege of hidden life. It is the privilege of indifference. We reach the point where nothing men may say or the world can do really touch us. We are impervious to the ridicule or even the persecution to which we may be subjected. If we have died, then no attack on self can rouse us any more. That is what it means to be hidden with Christ.

In verse 4, Paul concludes by saying that the believer's life will be REVEALED with CHRIST (appears). This is the future reference in this section. "When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory". The believer shares Christ's return. There is a sense in which the believer is with Christ in all His experiences. This is the climax. With Christ on the Cross, and therefore dead to sin, with Christ in rising from the dead, and therefore alive to God; with Christ in ascending to heaven, and therefore hidden with Him; and at the end with Christ in His return, therefore appearing with Him in glory. What an exhilarating prospect lies ahead of us.

But it carries a challenge too. If we are to be made manifest with Christ at the close of the age, how careful we should be to seek His likeness now. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God", wrote John; "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" (1 John 3:2). Then he underlines the implication of it all "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure"(1 John 3:3). It is said, that the second coming" is a moral stimulant, not a moral narcotic". It was intended to stir us up to holiness. If that indeed is the effect it is having on us, it will become apparent to those around us that we belong to Him. The boldness of Peter and John in Acts 4:13, impressed the rulers of Jerusalem who opposed them, come to the conclusion, "that they had been with Jesus". "WITH HIM" was seen to be the secret of the Apostles' effectiveness.

To our shame we have to confess, that too often we have been so little in His presence, that there is nothing to attract others to the Saviour. If "we are often with Him and linger in His presence, others will know. For their sake we must consecrate ourselves. The radiance or even the fragrance of Christ will reach others, who are yet to be brought into His saving knowledge, and the set purpose in Christ for them. The Lord write His word upon our hearts, although we may already know it in doctrine and not in day-to-day living.

Please pray for the comfort of the family members of late Bro. G. D. Charles, who was called Home to Glory on 3rd May 2002, having faithfully laboured in Shankerpalli and neighbouring areas, and associated with us for the past three decades.

Praying that we may experientially enter into the truth and blessing of what it really means to be "WITH CHRIST" and thus be vibrant and radiant in our service for the Master,

I remain yours in His grace,
K. PHILLIP

Rom. 6: 4,5,22; 2 Cor. 4: 7,10; Phil. 1: 21, 23

I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD—2 BAKHT SINGH

Even though Peter loved the Lord so much, at that time he began to rebuke Him. That goes to show how their minds were puzzled and confused on hearing these words. They thought, "Why should our Lord, Who has so much power suffer like that and die?" They had seen His power at the grave of Lazarus, when He said, "Lazarus, come forth!" They had no doubt about His power and authority. But when the Lord began to repeat these words they felt very sad and dejected. That is why He said, "... In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). That is the message for all of us. It does not matter where you are born, where you live, or what occupation or education you have. You have to go through the same sufferings, trials, and hardship, somewhere some time. You will not be able to conquer them by your own strength. Even though normally you are full of gratitude, very kind, very sincere, very good and so on, when sorrow and death come, you will be distressed and depressed. Even the strongest man trembles when sufferings come.

There was a man in France called Voltaire, a very great scholar. He wrote many books and he was also a very good speaker, but he was an atheist. He used to make fun of those who believed in God. A day came when he fell sick and became serious. No doctor could diagnose his disease. Every night he would cry out in fear and terror. His face used to be so fearful and horrible, that no nurse would nurse him for more than one night. At that time, all his knowledge proved to be of no use. His whole being was trembling with terror for many, many weeks. If you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ by experience, that will be your condition also, when the same sufferings come into your life some day. Your fear will drive you out of control, and you will find many, many storms raging in your heart, home and neighbourhood and that is why this message is for you and for everyone else.

The Lord Jesus Christ has conquered death, the world, sin and Satan for you and for me, to make us more than conquerors. Not only will you come out victorious over temptations but you will become stronger, richer and better through the very same trials.

(To be contd.)

Crossroads, Hyderabad -500 020. Edited by Bro. K. Phillip, Printed and Published by Bro. G. T. Benjamin for
Hebron, Golconda

Crossroads, Hyderabad -500020