

# Hebron Messenger

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June 1, 2003

NO. 11

## THE CHURCH'S DESTINY

"...the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him...and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev.22:3,5). Service is not only our privilege now, but also the Church's blessed prospect for eternity, for which eternal vocation of course, we have to be prepared and qualified now. Paul wrote to the Corinthians that it is the vocation of the saints to judge the world and judge the angels (1 Cor.6: 2,3). This is the most astonishing idea, in this Corinthian context, for their church hardly seemed to provide promising material for such a high vocation. Nevertheless, the truth that the redeemed are destined to reign with Christ, is repeatedly referred to in Revelation.

The Lord Jesus told His disciples that they were the light of the world. While that is true, it is equally true that the world is largely unable and unwilling to appreciate that light, even when it shines. The day will come however, when the Lamb-illuminated Church will provide help and guidance to the nations (Rev.21: 24). In this aspect. of things, we see the Bride as Queen -consort of the Lamb sharing His rule of loving service. In the divine concept, to rule is to serve.

It is quite impossible for us dwellers on earth and in time, to visualise how the eternal ages of untiring service provide for the fulfillment of our destiny. Whom will we rule? Whom will we serve? There is much that we do not understand in this connection, but that does not lessen the thrust of this final vision which speaks of "the healing of the nations" (Rev.22:2) and the ministration of blessing to them (Rev.21 :24). The Bride's destiny is closely connected with that of her divine Bridegroom; the Church will always be at His side, not just for personal enjoyment, but for "Universal ministry".

This should not lessen our devotion to the service of the Gospel now -far from it. Service in God's eyes arises not from some outward obligation but from an inward attitude of heart, which is in fact the Spirit of the Master (John 13: 15). Not that we should wait for eternity in the hope of a place and honour there, but rather that, because of eternal prospects, we should be the more devoted to the task of serving others and seeking to win men for Christ. If service is to be our future vocation, then we must stick to it now. It may prove that our present activities form a kind of apprenticeship. When we think compassionately of needy men, we must always remember that when we least expect it, the cry may ring out, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh".

Whatever else Revelation 11 may mean, it does give us some indications of the life of witnessing, which characterises those who in due course are raised up and hear the great voice saying unto them, "Come up hither" (Rev.1;1 :12). Though we may not clearly identify the two prophets as to who they are, like them we shall also be raised, hearing the voice of the Lord at His coming. This blessed hope will surely empower and encourage us in our witness for Christ in this hostile world.

The first point to note is that there are Christ's minimum of two. The Church's Testimony in the world involves individuals but should never be individualistic. We need one another. The next is that although their testimony is on earth, their origin and source of supply is in heaven. They are "the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth" (v.4). Every believer needs to be in intimate relationship with the Lord, and to know the constant supply of the Spirit, but especially if men are to stand true to God in a world which is spiritually Sodom and Egypt, and where their Lord was

crucified.

Is this Jerusalem in apostasy? Is it not a reminder to all witnesses that although the Church may have times of relative tolerance or even popularity, the world in which it witnesses is essentially, deeply, hostile to the Lord of Whom it testifies? Life may be relatively peaceful for us, but the time is coming when the painful aspect of living for Christ, as here mentioned becomes real. However, for them and for us all, there is the comfort in knowing that the great testimony, the Ark of the covenant, though hidden in heaven, is the unfailing assurance of God's faithfulness to His people who battle on earth (v. 19). Though hated and attacked, we will only be overtaken by death when our task here is completed (v. 7) and in God's good time His witnesses will be vindicated in a striking way. The manner of their going up to heaven in a cloud gives at least a hint of that great conclusion to this Dispensation which is described in 1 Thess. 4: 13-18, which we call rapture. The Lord sustain us all in this lively hope.

K.P.

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### LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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May 21, 2003

Dear Fellow -Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious and mighty Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Counsellor, Mighty God, everlasting Father and Prince of peace. May His peace rule within us, as we in everything by prayer, make our requests known to Him, with thanksgiving, that the God of peace Himself be with us, and all His servants and ministers of the Gospel.

The month being marked by holidays for educational institutions, V .3.S. ministries, Youth Camps and special meetings are going on in many parts of the land. About seventy places are being attended to from Hebron, for the V.B.S. ministry. Thanks be to God for those who laboured amongst us very fervently in the years gone by in Hebron, laying a good foundation for all who have been participating in this ministry, and they in turn have been teaching and helping others now with personnel and material. Let us continue to pray that children from various backgrounds may be drawn to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus and the new found faith and joy in the children may turn the hearts of parents too, that they may know the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom God hath sent, which is life Eternal (John 12:3).

We have been seeking to learn from the epistle of Paul to Corinthians, chapters 3 and 4, the principles and practices that should govern the worker and the work of God, that would be truly glorifying God, lasting and fully rewarding at His coming -to everyman as his work shall be. However, Paul warns everyone who buildeth to "take heed how he buildeth thereupon" (1 Cor.4:10). In verse 12, he speaks of two kinds of materials-, to be distinguished from each other in two ways. The first are costly materials while the latter, wood, hay and stubble are cheap materials. The other distinction is that the first are permanent, the other being temporary Gold, silver and precious stones are lasting. The fire only purifies them. Wood, hay and strubble are consumed by fire, and hence temporary. The simple point is of course, that building something of Eternal worth is always infinitely costly. For each one of us that cost will be very different. It is possible of course to build in a certain way that will impress men, (if that is your aim and interest and perhaps to impress the whole evangelical world) a while yet avoiding that cost. But it

will be a shoddy building and on the judgement day it will be revealed by fire (verse 13).

Fruitful Christian service and fruitful engagement in the work of God, and the cause of the Gospel is costly. It costs in terms of time and energy, not only physical energy but emotional energy, and nervous energy and above all spiritual energy in prayer warfare and battle. Supremely it is costly, in terms of being ready, for self and pride and self -glory and self-interest to be cast down into the dust so that the Lord alone may be everything.

Paul knew the travail of death working in him so that Christ be formed in others. And if we are going through some anguish that we are unable to explain through human language, let us believe that we are enduring the birth pangs of spiritual life, which God wants to bring forth somewhere.

There is also an infinite and astonishing reward in serving God (v.14). That the Eternal God should stoop down in His infinite grace and take poor redeemed sinners, with all their frailty and faithlessness for such service, is something baffling to the human mind.

What the reward is, it may be difficult for us to understand in this world. We know that it is not salvation. Paul speaks of a reward given to some, and the loss suffered by others, but in neither case is the reward or loss a matter of salvation. The reward is clearly a reward for faithful service. There is nothing more glorious in the wide world than to be called to serve God, with all our energy throughout all our days. And that is the Spirit, which should permeate all our service for God- a sense of glory and wonder that God permits us to work for Him. May He write this Word upon our hearts.

The Lord enabled us, Bro. G. T. Benjamin, myself and about sixty of our fellow -labourers to be present at the dedication service of the two rooms in the first floor of the building in Rock church, Pulivendala on 24th April, naming the rooms Berea and Bethany. Believers and workers from nearby assemblies were also present. Do pray that the Lord may accomplish His Word, in all them who have received it as the Word of God (1Thess.2: 13).

We covet your prayers for the five days V .B.S ministry, which is being held at Jehovah-Shammah. Bro. David Cornelius, weakened by the infirmities of age as well as Bro. C. Rajamanickam awaiting surgery for his Cardiac problem need our prayers. Also pray for Sis. Glory wife of Bro. Maxwell (Deacon at Jehovah -Shammah) as she has been advised total rest, because of heart problem.

We would also value your prayers for the repair and renovation work of the buildings in Jehovah -Shammah compound, as they are more than hundred years, with cracks on the walls and leaky roof. Also pray for the re-roofing of a separate Sunday School Hall, for helpful accommodation and food serving etc., during special youth camps.

Marriages too have been arranged by parents for their respective grown up children, in the coming weeks, and some of them we mention here, for your prayers, that the Lord even Jesus may build their homes according to Biblical principles and precepts, and not be governed by secular standards or values. Such partnership as "being heirs together of the grace of life" according to 1 Pet. 3:7, may be used of the Lord to reflect the love of Christ for His Church, and contribute to the strength and witness of the local church, under the Headship of the Lord.

Bro. S. Martin covets our prayers for the marriages of his grandchildren, Bro. David's eldest son Bro. Jabez Emmanuel with Sis. Esther (daughter of Bro. Veerraju of Chinnamushidiwada) and his first daughter Sis. Jerusha Glory with Bro. Aravind Kumar (son of Bro. K. V. Prabhakar Rao of Vijayanagaram), God willing they will be united in Holy Matrimony at "Salem" Prayer House, Visakhapatnam on 14th May.

Bro. Isaac, God's servant at Cuddapah also covets our prayers for the marriage of his daughter Sis.

Suvarna, with Bro. Xavier (son of Vasanth Kumar, God's servant at Adoni) God willing to take place at Beersheba, Cuddapah on 27th May. Also Bro. Stephen Chinnappa God's servant at Moriah Prayer House, Chittoor covets our prayers for the marriage of his first daughter Sis. Mercy with Bro. Victor Vedanayakam (son of Bro. Jeeva Raj) God willing to be solemnised at Jehovah-Shammah, Anantapur on Monday, 9th June.

Praying that the presence and power of the Lord be with His people, in the special gatherings, and marriages as announced, to establish and enliven all who would participate in their heavenly calling,

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K.PHILLIP

Acts 20: 23, 24, 32

1 Thess. 3: 3, 4

Rom. 12: 11, 12

## YE ARE MY WITNESSES—9

BAKHT SINGH

"And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:39). What a joy Philip brought in his life! God had brought Philip at the right time, when the eunuch was reading Isaiah 53. Because Philip had obeyed God implicitly, he was able to give the message straightway to the eunuch. He knew from the very Scripture portion, what the Lord wanted him to speak. It is by obeying God's commands that God's servants will receive His message. There is no need to be worried about it. By obeying God fully, one can enjoy God's favour.

### Acts 9

We have seen how God allowed persecution to spread far and wide. God is sovereign. He knows how to defeat the devices of the enemy, only if we give complete charge of ourselves to Him. At that time, Saul was the most bitter enemy of the Gospel and the Lord Jesus Christ. The same Saul became Paul, the most devoted servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since his conversion, the Lord used his ministry and his testimony in a wonderful way. He suffered much for the Gospel's sake.

The Lord called Saul by his name. He said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Saul's fellow-travellers heard a voice and saw a light, but did not hear what Jesus said. We have to make sure that the Lord speaks to us saying, "My son, my daughter, thy sins be forgiven thee", and then we receive His peace and joy. But signs and dreams are not proofs of salvation.

And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized"(v.18). The mystery of baptism is, whether they are apostles or others, they all had to be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no exception. Our spiritual growth depends upon obeying God fully. When the Lord spoke to Saul on his way to Damascus, Saul said to Him, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (v.6). The Lord said to Saul, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do". Then the Lord appeared to Ananias and told him to go to Damascus to meet Saul. If you want anyone to do any job for you, a very important job. you will say, "It is very, very important. You must do it". It has the same meaning here. "You go to Damascus and' will tell you what you must do". That was the first message given to Saul.

Paul obeyed in baptism immediately. That is how the early believers began to grow spiritually. After baptism, you find courage coming into you. "But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ" (v.22). So by obedience, we become stronger spiritually.

### Acts 10

We have seen in chapter 9 that the Lord broke the plan of Peter to teach him a very important lesson. He went to Joppa to pray for Dorcas and he stayed there. Unless the Lord broke Peter's pride-, He could never show him His plan. Peter was still proud of his nationality as a Jew. He ministered only to the Jews even though the Lord commanded them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. In chapter 10 we find how God had to teach him that lesson. Peter became hungry while they were preparing food. So he went to the housetop to pray. Rather than grumbling, he began to pray. You also do not be angry when the food is late. There on the housetop the Lord spoke to him. He saw a sheet coming down from heaven with all kinds of creatures in it. He heard the voice of God saying, "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean" (vs. 13, 14). This happened thrice. God of holiness and grace cannot ask anyone to do anything that is wrong. God was speaking to Peter and he had to obey. But because of his self- righteousness he said, "No, Lord," as though God was making a mistake. God cannot make a mistake. We must obey though we cannot fully understand what God tells us. That is how God taught an important lesson to Peter.

At first, God sent an angel to the house of Cornelius (v.3). Even though the angel was sent to him, the way of salvation had to be explained by Peter only. That privilege is given only to men and not to angels. The honour and privilege to be His witnesses is given to us. Again we see how the Apostle Peter preached about the power of resurrection. "Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly...whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (vs.40,43). Now this message on resurrection is very, very important. It is through that message that God's power is manifested, and lives are changed. And this is the message; the One Who was crucified and buried, rose again.

"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized... ?"(v.47). As soon as they were born again, they were baptized. We find that this is God's plan. Through baptism we grow spiritually and enjoy fully the power of resurrection and understand our spiritual equality with all believers.

(To be contd.)

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# Hebron Messenger

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NO. 12

## THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL

The message which Christians are called upon to carry to the nations is indeed a unique one. While others may weary us with their fanciful philosophies and mysterious mythologies, the message of God's Gospel deals with known historical facts. It tells how Jesus of Nazareth died outside the city of Jerusalem, -was buried, -and then emerged from His grave on the third day, -thereby verifying His claim to be Saviour of the world. This "report" has the ring of solid and dependable truth, and countless souls, who have taken God at His word have experienced miraculous New Birth and blessed newness of Life. They have touched Almighty Truth, and God has set His Seal upon them.

The original word for "gospel" (Gk. EUENGELLO) means literally, "good message", or "glad tidings". The same word is found in Luke 2:10, where we read of God's angel appearing to those shepherds "keeping watch over their flock by night", -and said to them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you GOOD TIDINGS of great joy, which shall be to all people". "Good Tidings" indeed, -

"Unto you...a Saviour which is Christ the Lord".

The Apostle Paul gives us a true summary of the Gospel in his first letter to the Corinthians. This is how he puts it:

"...I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and ...By which also ye are saved,... Christ died for our sins ...he was buried...he rose again the third day ...and was SEEN of...," (1 Cor.15:1-8).

In a word, it was just the story of our Lord's death and resurrection, -historically accomplished, and abundantly attested and verified. And that is the message we are privileged to carry to the world today!

It is important to notice that the first carriers of the Gospel HAD TO BE those who had witnessed these events with their own eyes (Acts 1: 22,23). We, who follow on, have been given the same privilege because of what is perhaps a still greater qualification; -we have SEEN that Blessed One with an inward eye that has been mercifully 'opened by the Blessed Holy Spirit. Thus, we also can say, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen" (John 3: 11; -C/p. also 1 John 1: 1). How wonderful when we can say, "...it pleased God, ...To reveal his Son in me" (Gal.1: 15,16).

We need to say, here, that this message is something that is bitterly hated by the powers of darkness. We are told that "the prince of this world" (Satan), has "blinded the minds of those who believe not ...lest the gospel of the glory of Christ should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4: 4). This blinding work has gone on throughout the intervening centuries, and the sharpest minds of natural men still seem incapable of grasping the simple facts. What a mercy it is when we can go on to say with Paul, "FOR GOD who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (v.6)! We could say that the enlightening of a soul is actually a repetition of Genesis 1: 2! What wonderful grace! May it please the Lord to say again, "Let there be Light". And may He give us the privilege of passing on the "report" (Isa.53:1) -far and wide.

As you will see, we are sending out this series of messages under the title, "The Glorious Gospel of Christ". Paul uses the phrase in 1 Timothy 1: 11, and speaks of "the Glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which had been committed to our trust". He was awed at the message entrusted to him, and Satan was afraid of it! Truly, -it is a Glorious Gospel. We shall now discuss some of the reasons why it is a GLORIOUS Gospel. Doubtless there are countless other "reasons", -but the few that we shall mention will more than suffice to show the unparalleled splendour of these "glad tidings".

First of the reasons why it is "Glorious", must surely be that it is a message which sets before us A GLORIOUS PERSON, -the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The good news is a Person; -the glad tidings are tidings of a Person, -a real Person, -a Person Who is alive today! That Person Himself is the glory of the Gospel.

Paul tells us that grace had been given him to "preach... the unsearchable riches OF CHRIST" (Eph.3:8), and that he was determined to know nothing among men save JESUS CHRIST! (1 Cor.2:2). He was prepared to be "God's ignoramus" ! And it was just the same with Peter. His message on the Day of Pentecost really began with the words "Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 2:22). The few verses preceding verse 22 were just a preamble, explaining the strange happenings that were going on all around; -then came the message itself; -"Jesus of Nazareth...". The climax of the message was reached in verse 32; -"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are, witnesses". Then comes the statement, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, ...BOTH LORD AND CHRIST" (v.36). We could Summarise all those early days of the Church's history with the words of Acts 5:42; "They ceased not to teach and preach JESUS CHRIST".

We do not hesitate to say that the Church's task from the beginning has been to IMPRESS THAT CHRIST on the minds and consciences of men. The Holy Spirit is engaged in the same task (John 16:14), and, while our emphasis remains identical, we may be assured of His "fellowship" and His anointing.

When our Lord was here among us, He said, "I, if I be lifted up... will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). He was then referring to that approaching hour when He would be "lifted up" on the Cross, " 'twixt earth and heaven". He comforted His disciples by assuring them that even that dark spectacle would prove strangely magnetic to the sons of men, -and we know that has been so, - right up to our day. That dying thief, hanging beside Him on that day, was truly "drawn" to Christ, -and cried out, "LORD, remember me" (Luke 23:42), - and went straight to paradise! Thank God, we have the privilege now of "lifting up" a RISEN AND EXALTED SAVIOUR, -the same Great Lord of all. Whenever that is done, we may be sure He will be "drawing men" towards Himself- They will only need the grace to respond!

The whole glory of Christ, of course, is something beyond all comprehension, and certainly beyond all telling. No evangelist can ever tell all, but every evangelist should continually be passing on those basic facts that we have mentioned; -CHRIST, ALIVE, EXALTED, and "mighty to save" (Isa.63: 1). More can follow as opportunity presents itself, -here a little and there a little (Isa.28: 10).

How sad it is when professing servants of the Lord are seen doing the exact opposite of this, -just impressing themselves on the minds of their hearers. If people go away from our meetings just thinking of us, we have failed miserably and shamefully in our trust. May God ever spare us!

We sum up by saying that our Gospel is a GLORIOUS Gospel, because it always sets before us a GLORIOUS PERSON. May we truly see His Glory and ever speak of HIM (John 12:41).

(To be contd)

C.R.G.

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## LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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June 6, 2003

Dear Fellow -Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who having made peace through the blood of His Cross, hath reconciled us unto Himself, in the body of His flesh through death, to present us holy, unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight (Col.1: 21,22). "...when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). Paul writes about this wonderful transformation that is awaiting His saints, whose conversation is in heaven, that the Saviour we look for "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body..."(Phil.3: 20,21). Let us yield ourselves in every area and faculty of our life to His wonderful and transforming power, by the Spirit that dwelleth in us.

The Transfiguration of Christ reminds us of man's original destiny. Satan's rebellion and enmity were connected with God's eternal purpose for man. Through his subtlety he made man to fall and come short of God's glory, although he came from the hands of his Creator, a majestic creature destined for greater glories. That is why when sin threatened the future, the Creator became the Redeemer, paying the price to redeem Adam's sons. When God first made man, He had in mind a specific destiny for the human race, an eternal purpose, for which He had performed the creative act. Jesus became a member of the human race to ensure the success of that original purpose and what Peter saw on the Mount was a perfect all glorious man.

The first Adam was a failure; he was never glorified. The last Adam was the One Whom Peter saw on the Mount of Transfiguration; so far as personal attainment was concerned, He was full of glory .It may seem wrong to make any comparison between the two, yet if we consider Adam in his unfallen state we can understand why he was called, "the figure of him that was to come" (Rom.5:14). Take the matter of his clothing. The superficial reader will exclaim that Adam had no covering until he sewed fig leaves together, and was subsequently given garments of skin. The more careful student will note that it was only after they had broken with God, that Adam and Eve were conscious of shameful nakedness. The truth seems therefore to be, that when they sinned, they were suddenly stripped of their former covering. They became naked when they lost their glory. If this is the case then it would seem that previously they must have been clothed with light. This accords with some Bible facts.

When the Old Testament saints saw angels in man's form, were they naked? Of course not. Yet when they disappeared they left no abandoned clothes behind. When angels were at Christ's empty tomb, did they appear unclothed? Certainly not. They are described as being "in shining garments" (Luke 24:4). But consider our Lord in resurrection glory .At the Cross His clothes were snatched from Him, divided up and gambled over. They were never returned. His naked body was reverently covered in grave clothes by Nicodemus and Joseph, and so He lay in the sepulchre. When He rose from the dead, He left the linen clothes behind for all to see. Yet He appeared to one and another of His disciples as a normally clothed Person. And what is more He easily disappeared from their sight, without leaving behind any garments. Now when Peter saw the Lord Jesus on the Mountain he reported that "His raiment became white and dazzling". Clearly, the Holy Person of the Lord and even His clothes were bright as light (Luke 9:29). The vision on the Mount foretold the destiny of the redeemed mankind. Unfallen man was clothed with

light, and this is to be the joyful experience of raptured believers. We are to be "clothed upon".

This might seem unimportant, if we did not appreciate that in the Scriptures, clothes are used to indicate character. In the Bible, what a man wears reveals what he is. Now in a limited way Adam was a figure of the man, as he was intended to be in this respect also, that he brought great pleasure to the heart of the Creator. When God looked on His original creation with man at its head, the verdict was given, that He considered it to be "very good" (Gen.1: 31). When the Son of man stood on the Mountain, the voice came from heaven - "...in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 17:5). The Lord Jesus had regained for Adam's race, the lost status before God. In the divine eyes new creation is "very good". The Mount of Transfiguration pointed to that coming day, when we, the redeemed, will bring unalloyed pleasure to the heart of the Creator God. He will at last be able to realise His original love purpose. The human race will be able to take its rightful place, never again falling short of His glory. In Peter's day the whole Mountaintop must have glowed with Christ's glory. In the day of Christ, the whole universe will be ablaze with that glory, as displayed in the Church, and nations "shall walk in the light of it" (Rev.21: 24). The suffering saint Peter, who had been a witness of the sufferings of Christ, found superlative comfort in knowing that he was also partaker of the "glory that shall be revealed" (1 Pet.5:1 ).

The glory of sonship is the goal, which Adam never reached. It was an objective which Israel as a whole could never realise, though it was for them (Rom. 9:4). By the cross Peter came to know new birth (1 Pet.1: 23), entering into the realm of sonship and receiving precious and exceeding great promises to become partaker of the divine nature.

Paul had a great deal to say about the feature of the coming glory .He called it adoption as sons (Rom.8:23), to coincide with the redemption of our bodies, and involving nothing less than the whole redeemed family of sons, gathered round the Firstborn and deriving everything from Him. If on the Mount, heaven reverberated with the Father's cry of delight at His lovely Son, what will it be like for Him -and for us -when many sons are brought to Glory ! The Lord write this word upon our hearts, and enable us to be in the enjoyment experientially of what is written in 2 Cor.3:17, 18.

Sis.(Mrs.)Lazarus, who was an inmate of Hebron for many years, serving In the fellowship, was called Home to Glory on 26th May after along period of sickness. She rests from her labours. June 6th, 2003, marks the 100th birth anniversary of beloved Bro. Bakht Singh and a special time of prayer, thanksgiving and sharing; has been arranged in the evening meeting to be held in Hermon compound. Continue to pray for his biography, which is in the process of final editing and printing.

God willing, the following God's servants and handmaidens of the Lord serving in the churches of our fellowship, will be united in Holy matrimony. So pray for the marriage of Bro. M. Barnabas (NTPC, Ramagundam) with Sis. J. Anna Jocelyn (Hebron), and Bro. Y. Abraham (Avilala, Tirupathi) with Sis. K. Mary (Jehovah-Shammah, Chennai) on 11th June, in the presence of the saints at Hebron.

Please pray for the construction work of the first floor of Bethany Prayer House, Zaheerabad, that the Lord's plan and provision be available for speedy completion.

Praying that the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus, may stablish, strengthen and settle us, in this glorious heavenly calling in Christ,

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K.PHILLIP

2 Cor. 4: 1,17,18

Psa. 84 : 11

Exo. 33 : 18, 19

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**YE ARE MY WITNESSES -10**  
**BAKHT SINGH**

**Acts 11**

The pride of nationality is so great, that even though God had done a great work through Peter in the house of Cornelius, the people of Jerusalem opposed him again and again. " And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them" (vs.2, 3). Later on, Peter had to be rebuked by the Apostle Paul. "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision (Gal.2:11-12). Because of the fear of the Jews Peter did not eat with the Gentiles.

Throughout the ages the enemy has used the same weapon to defeat God's people; take pride in nation, family, position and education. Even today it is the same. That is the cause of division everywhere -high caste, low caste, North Indian, South Indian, Andhras and Tamilians, all such differences are used by the enemy to defeat God's people. In the same way, there are different sections and denominations. That is why many believers are living in division and strife. But Paul the Apostle rebuked those believers who were carried away by such differences. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them, which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (1Cor.1: 10-12). These believers called themselves by the name of the apostles like Cephas and Paul. That brought division and also sin among them. Remember, if you want to be used by the Lord, do not go by these names. You are a Christian. No man, no country died for you. Why do you call yourselves after the name of England or America or any other country? In all these subtle ways Satan brings defeat in the church. He makes people to think only of the name rather than the life of the Lord Jesus. That is why Paul says in 1 Cor.2:2, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified". That is the secret of knowing how much life is flowing from us. Do not go by their names or what they say, but go by the life of Christ. God's Word says, "...Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom.8:9). In the same way, becoming a member of some denomination is also wrong. If you become a member of a denomination, it means, you are a part of all their teachings and practices. It is an unscriptural practice. You are a member of the Lord Jesus Christ. All other names bring division. Some are called by the name of a country or a person or a doctrine. That leads to division and strife. We see how in the early church these names brought much division.

"Now they, which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only" (Acts 11: 19).

(To be contd.)

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## THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL - 2

In these studies, we are discussing what the Bible again and again, calls, "The glorious Gospel of Christ", and we are suggesting some reasons why it is, indeed, a glorious Gospel. The first and foremost is the fact, it sets before us the Glorious Person of Christ. Indeed, indeed, Christ Risen and glorified is the Gospel; -God's own "good news" for a lost world.

Moving on from that point, we now wish to show that that glorious Gospel relates to a glorious plan and purpose that has ever been in the heart of God. For that reason, also, it is a glorious Gospel.

It is interesting to notice that Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost emphasises that the "strange things" happening in Jerusalem on that day, were events that had been prophesied centuries earlier. He quotes the words of Joel regarding the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; -words written 800 years before that time. He also mentions the prophetic word of David, uttered centuries before Joel. Peter simply tells his audience, -"This is THAT"! God was working according to His foretold plan; -step by step fulfilling His foreknown purpose. The time had come for Messiah to be raised from the dead, and highly exalted, -and to pour forth His Blessed Spirit. All was transpiring "according to purpose". That; we now say, is a further reason why God's Gospel is "glorious"; -it accords with, and further unfolds, God's great eternal plan.

The fact that God has a plan, and is working to that plan, is stated many times in the Bible, -but there are also passages which indicate certain glorious aspects of that plan. Let us give some examples. Ephesians 1: 9 speaks of "God's good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself". The following verse tells us what that purpose is; - "That in...the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth" (Eph.1 :10). The original wording here is, we believe, most enlightening, -and carries with it very far -reaching significance. The phrase "gather together in one" means literally to "head up into one", or to "bring under HEADSHIP". The word used is the ordinary word for "head", -as in Matt.1 0:30, and, at the end of Ephesians one, -it is applied to Christ, "the Head of the Church which is His Body" (Eph.1: 22). One translator, (Jerusalem Bible), has rendered Eph.1: 9 -"He has let us know the mystery of His purpose, -the hidden plan He so kindly made in Christ from the beginning...that He would bring everything together under Christ as Head". We can only pause and say, "What a glorious purpose that is". It visualises both the positional and the VITAL Headship of Christ over everything that makes up God's new creation; -all gathered, all assembled, all placed, under the Living Headship of Christ! That will be the kind of government that will operate in the "fullness of times", -the final age towards which all other ages have always been moving. That, we say, is part of God's eternal plan and purpose. And our Christian Gospel is glorious because it is related to that GLORIOUS PURPOSE. Indeed, it is itself a part of that purpose, or should we say, that purpose is part of the Gospel. Glorious Gospel indeed!

Needless to say, there are countless aspects to that Great Divine purpose, and here we can only touch lightly on one or two of them. We would like, however, to make a comment on something that is stated in the third chapter of Ephesians. Verse ten of that chapter tells us that God planned to show forth His own "manifold wisdom" to principalities and powers in heavenly places, -and to do so through the instrumentality of the Church. To understand that verse, one needs to absorb what Paul has been saying in the earlier verses of the chapter. There, he has discussed the fact that both Jews and Gentiles had been

brought together in God's Church, -in fact they no longer knew each other as "Jew" or "Gentile". They were all part of God's NEW Man, and their NEW citizenship was in Heaven! All earlier considerations and distinctions had been crucified and buried in the death and burial of the Lord, and now Life was NEW under the Headship of Christ. "Irreconcilables" had been reconciled, and God's wisdom had accomplished it, -the Wisdom of the Cross. Principalities and powers, "looking on", saw ex-Jews and ex-Gen- tiles greeting each other as "Brother", and they could only marvel at this masterpiece of divine wisdom. All are now "bound together in ONE 'bundle of Life'"! (1 Sam.25:29). WHAT WISDOM! HALLELUJAH !

Putting it into very simple terms, we could say that, in ages past, God planned to "educate" countless unseen beings, on the subject of His own inscrutable wisdom, -and to use the Church as His chosen blackboard. It is in the Church that there lies the evidence of what God's wisdom can do. "Of the twain, He has made One NEW Man" (Eph.2:15), -and peace has followed. And He did it- "in Himself". What the wisest of this world have never been able to do, HE HAS DONE, -in the all- surpassing wisdom of the Cross. What an accomplishment, -what a great Eternal Plan, now gloriously realised !

It would be right to say that, since the fall of Adam, humanity has been a shattered vessel, with countless widely -scattered particles, -but now God has a NEW vessel, -renewed men under the Headship of His Son. All that was "old" has been crucified and buried in the (representative) death of Christ, and a NEW humanity has emerged in the reality of Christ's resurrection. In that New Man there is no Jew nor Greek; -all is HEAVENLY! There is seen the "manifold wisdom of God", and principalities and powers are amazed at such an accomplishment. "What hath GOD wrought!"(Num.23:23).

It is important to notice the word "now" in Eph.3:10. Paul expected the enlightening work ("education", we called it!) to go on in his day. It was not just something planned for the future. Wherever there are living expressions of God's Church, it is now impacting on those unseen powers, -they are seeing the evidence of the immensity of God's "manifold wisdom". THEY too, are learning the wisdom of the Cross. Surely this should encourage those of us who are called to preach the Gospel. Unseen forces are looking on, and they are learning their lessons.

We would like to close off this section by quoting Gal.3:27,28:-

"For as many of you as have been baptized (placed or plunged) into Christ have put on (been clothed with) Christ. THERE is neither Jew nor Greek, THERE is neither bond nor free; THERE is neither male nor female: FOR YE ARE ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS".

Manifold wisdom indeed! What a plan, -what a purpose, -WHAT A GOSPEL!

(To be contd)

C.R.G.

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## LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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Telephone No: 7613066

June 18, 2003

Dear Fellow -Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath in His mercy and goodness led us into the middle of the year. May we be enabled to review our past and renounce and repudiate anything that might have found its way into our life and service for the Lord, contrary to truth and godliness. We need to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, at the same time appropriate afresh the cleansing power of His precious blood, and look straight ahead, having a clear and direct path for our ongoing according to His purpose in Christ for us (Prov.4: 25-27; Phil.3:13, 14).

Paul had to blame the Corinthians for limiting their vision to the things immediately before their eyes. "You look at things after the outward appearance -or at the things which are before your eyes" (2 Cor.10:7). To be spiritually short sighted, focusing only on what is at hand, is to , become too easily satisfied and contented in the realm of things spiritual; to have a small and narrow horizon and fail to appreciate the much more God has in mind. It is so easy to settle into a very limited and circumscribed area, thinking only of the spiritual things with which we are familiar and which seem so important to us, while we fail to take of the much more which lies beyond us to which we are being called. It is possible to be so shut in, so near -sighted, that we go round and round in circles, never looking out to the new dimensions of spiritual experience, to which God is calling us.

The Corinthians seemed to have done this. They were looking at themselves, their gifts, and affairs, full of concern for their own assembly, which was perhaps right enough. Apparently they were not able to appreciate the high purpose of God represented by Paul. We have to look beyond the immediate factors or features to the eternal values in Christ. God has much more light and truth to break forth from His Word.

To the Philippians Paul wrote, "not looking each of you to his own things..."(Phil.2:4). He was urging them not to be governed always by how things affected them personally; not to measure every matter in respect of gain or loss. Self forgetfulness is one of the secrets of spiritual progress. A selfish look is a downward look and as such is to be avoided by those who desire real progress in spiritual life. Paul knew that the onward march of the fellowship of God's people would be seriously impaired if each one was preoccupied with his own affairs, even though it may be in the realm of spiritual things.

It becomes apparent that a great deal depends upon our looking. So we are not surprised that towards the end of the letter to the Hebrews, which reminds us that we are called to partnership with Christ and press on towards fulness, there stands this call to look off from what is behind, unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, -not only from what is behind, but also from what is round about, or what is near at hand and what is essentially selfish.

Abraham the great man of faith, looked for a heavenly city and a heavenly country, and so was saved from looking back or settling down. Much was bound up with this sustained look of his. Often he was tempted to seek the more immediate benefits, some middle ground which was less than God's best. The Lord had to constantly call him to take his eyes off earth's distractions and rewards, so that he could look away to the essentially spiritual and heavenly goal of his calling. He was thus saved from staggering by keeping his eyes on God's promised goal. A very relevant passage in this connection is, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:17, 18).

It is the eternal, which is in view, and this calls for adjustment in many respects of our affairs, so that our lives can be directed towards the permanent glory of God's purpose for us. Just as Satan tempted Christ, offering Him the kingdoms of this world and their glory, so he will try to distract and divert our attention, from the will of God, by offering seeming advantages now. The Lord help us all to maintain an onward and upward look, in our pilgrimage.

Bro. T. E. Koshy, with elders and saints of the International Assembly, 4274, Lafayette Road, Jamesville,

NY (Phone 315-492-0861 or 445- 1834) covets our earnest prayers for the 21st North America Convocation, God willing to be held at Le Moyne College, Syracuse, NY, from July 16th to 20th, 2003. They have also expressed their prayerful earnest desire that I may be enabled to participate in this forthcoming Convocation after a gap of two years. Do pray that the Lord may make His plan clear and grant travel mercies in my advanced age.

God's servant Bro. James Ambrose and responsible brethren at Rajahmundry; are thankful for answered prayers for the Convocation meetings which gave over by 1st June. An average of 3000 attended, in spite of the hot weather. The ministry of the Word through brothers K. Aravindam, J.C. Rao, B. Timothy and others was instrumental in leading souls to salvation and deeper commitment. The Lord supplied all the needs exceeding abundantly above our asking. Praise be to Him.

Bro. Jeya Singh, one of the elders in the church at Peniel, Palayamkottai covets our prayers for the marriage of his son Bro. J. Timothy Asir with Sis. Rebekah Salomi (daughter of Bro. John Paul, Perumalpuram), God willing to be solemnized on the 3rd July, at Peniel, Palayamkottai.

Let us pray for the servants of God, labouring with us, as they are being posted to new assemblies, in relation to the profitable furtherance of the work and testimony of the Lord in the land, that the Lord may fully provide for them and their families and the schooling of children etc., in the new Houses of prayer, they would be staying, taking oversight of the flocks together with local responsible brethren and helpers in the ministry of the Gospel.

Bro. Krupanandam, God's servant at Hebron, was called to Glory on the 12th June, after a period of sickness. He rests from his labours.

Praying that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all, renewing us by His Spirit in the inner man to press forward in our heavenly calling, and serve Him acceptably,

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K.PHILLIP

Heb. 12 .1,2,28,29

2 Cor. 9 : 8

Titus 2 .12-14

## YE ARE MY WITNESSES -11

BAKHT SINGH

"Now they, which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only" (Acts 11: 19) .The believers were scattered through persecution and that is how the Gospel was taken to different places. Thus God overrules and uses many attacks of Satan for His own purpose.

One man of God went to a certain village and the people there did not receive him. Before leaving he prayed for them saying, "Lord, bless them and prosper them". Then he went to another village, where the people received him very gladly, and heard the word of God. Before leaving he prayed for them also saying, "Lord, scatter them". Then his co-worker asked him, "How is it that you asked the Lord to bless those who did not receive you and to scatter those who have received you?" He replied, "Those people who refused to receive me, will bring only evil if they go to other places. It is better that they remain in their own place. But if the good people are scattered, they will carry with them the good news".

Throughout the ages, the Lord has used persecution to spread the Gospel far and wide. For example, the Gospel spread through the believers at Thessalonica because they went through much affliction. We read about it in 1 Thess.1: 6-8; "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place...". Through sufferings and afflictions God's word went on spreading far and wide.

Again Paul says in Phil.1: 12, 13, "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places". These words were written by Paul while he was in prison in Rome for the Gospel's sake. The believers in Philippi and Ephesus were feeling very sad. But Paul says, "Don't be sorry for my sufferings. God has allowed them for His own purpose". Through afflictions the Gospel was taken to the whole palace and to the emperor. When Paul was a prisoner living in his own hired house, the Roman soldiers had to keep watch over him by turns. While these soldiers were on duty Paul went on preaching and thus they could listen to the Gospel. One by one those soldiers must have been converted. Through those converted soldiers, the Gospel was taken to the whole of the Roman Empire, and even to Caesar's palace. So Paul saw for himself how God had honoured him in putting him there to be a witness through sufferings. In the early Church the Gospel spread through persecution. Even so, today if the believers suffer joyfully, -they not only grow spiritually, but the Gospel also will spread. Wherever there is no suffering or persecution, there is no growth. Instead there will be strife, division, parties and hatred.

Now though the early believers preached the Gospel, they preached to the Jews only. "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only" (Acts 11: 19). That is why their spiritual growth was stunted. But there were some unknown believers from Cyprus and Cyrene who took the Gospel even to Greece. "And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord"(v\$.20,21). God's word was thus preached through them to the Gentiles.

(To be contd.)

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