

Hebron Messenger

Published Fortnightly

VOI. 44

December 10th, 2006

NO 25

THE RIVER OF GOD

From Psalm 65 we learn about the descending (!!)"river of God". The Psalmist describes very beautifully the effects of the refreshing rain on a dry and thirsty land, and we can link it with the promise of Isaiah 44:3; "...I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground". We can draw a number of lessons from the beautiful description in Psalm 65, relative to our spiritual refreshing.

THE ABUNDANCE OF THE SUPPLY

God promises a descending "RIVER" (v.9). Few of us have seen that God's greatest "river" is the descending one, - RAIN! And that "river" is "FULL of water", and God waters "abundantly". "Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof" (Psa. 65:10: cp. John 10:10). All the fullness of God is in Christ and God fills us from Him (Col. 2:9,10); - supplying "ALL our need" from His "riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTS

when the "Rain" comes down! (Psa. 65:10).

1) The breaking down of high ridges. "Leveling the ridges" (N IV). This always happens when the "rain" comes on "bumpy" fields! This reminds us of Isa. 2:17, "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low : and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day". Also, it reminds us of 2 Cor. 10:5, "Casting down..., every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God".

2) The drenching of the furrows. (NIV)

How true that God pours HIMSELF and His blessings into humble and lowly hearts! Though He is high yet hath He respect unto THE LOWLY (Psa. 138:6). THOSE are the ones He finds and fills in "times of refreshing" (Acts 3:19).

3) The Beautiful SOFTENING of all ("Soft with showers")

How necessary is this work amongst God's people! We are often like those "sons of Zeruah" who were "TOO HARD" even for David (2 Sam. 3:39). As David's officers they were strong in battle, but their INNER HARDNESS was a grief to David. Thank God, when HE pours out His rain even the hardest can become soft and tender; — like the fine flour of the offerings (Lev. 2:1 etc.). Paul said, "be ye kind one to another, tender hearted" (Eph. 4:32), and "Let your gentleness be evident to all" (Phil. 4:5 N IV). God does this work by His showers.

THE ULTIMATE EVIDENCE

when God's "river" descends.

Three such "evidences" are listed in verse 13; — the closing verse of the Psalm.

1) "The pastures are clothed with flocks", Here we have the reappearing of shepherds with their contented flocks; — happy local churches! This is the normal spiritual "ultimate" in true revival. See Acts 2:44, — "all that believed were together". We are saved to be "together" under shepherd - care.

2) "The valleys..., covered with CORN" i.e abundant supply of LIFE — GIVING FOOD for the people of the Lord. Spiritual revival brings new insights into God's Word, and richer ministries of His Truth, — an open heaven in every sense!

3) "They shout for joy, they also sing" This is an understandable "ultimate"; ...uncontainable joy and overflowing WORSHIP. When God visits a city or a community, joy will always be evident. CHRIST becomes everything, and thus all burdens are lifted (Cp. Samria —Acts 8:8).

O for that wonderful "River of God"; — God pouring out the FULNESS OF HIS SON on every area and aspect of our need. We read that Eljah "prayed ... AND THE RAIN CAME" (James 5:18). See also 1 Kings 18:41, 45, — "there is a sound of abundance of RAIN". "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). C.R.G.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

**As from: Christian fellowship center, NO.7, Vivekanand rd,
Welawetta, Colombo -6, Sri Lanka,
Telephone no. 94-112581901, 27/11/2006.**

Dear Fellow -Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Who hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God from His face. And we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves servants for Jesus' sake (2 Cor. 4:5,6). In the next chapter the Apostle Paul states that "... we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us : ... be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

Our becoming ambassadors for Christ demands that being constrained by the love of Christ, we should henceforth live unto Him Who died for us and rose again, and not unto ourselves. In 2 Cor. 5:14 we see the motivating power of the new life; "the love of Christ constraineth us". The word "constrain" in the original Greek suggests a torrent bursting its banks, and breaking every barrier before it. This is the opposite of our narrow, selfish life, weeping over self, and making self the pivot of life.

Let us clearly note in this passage that it is not our love for Christ, but the love of Christ Himself constraining us. The love, which was in the heart of God, when He "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son". What must heaven have been without Jesus? What must the angels have thought as they looked at the Only Begotten Son of the Father, walking upon this earth in form as a man, putting Himself under the restrictions of our humanity, to walk step by step the path of humiliation — giving Himself up to the hands of the creatures He had made, lying powerless in those hands, and finally letting Him carry the cross of shame to be nailed to it!

Oh, the love that was in the heart of the Father to give up His Son for you and me; the love that was in the heart of the Son, to make Him to leave His Home to come to this poor world! Oh, the

love that made Him spend Himself out for others from morning till night; the love that made sinners draw near to Him, the love that made Him receive sinners and eat with them; the love that impelled Him all the way to Calvary; the love that endured the cross despising shame!

Our love breaks down at every point. Our love to Christ is a very little thing. But if only we could become channels for that mighty torrent of love, which broke out from the Father, and was manifested in the Son to a dying world, would it not be different? Think of the love of Christ sweeping through us, and breaking every barrier down.

Let us remember that it was this wondrous love of Christ, which enabled the Apostle Paul to live the poured out life that he did. When we look at Christ we cannot forget that He was the Holy One of God; but as we think of the Apostle Paul, we know that he called himself "the chief of sinners", and we can see that the love of Christ can empower even one who was the chief of sinners, It is impossible to whip ourselves up to this love. We may say how bad we are; confess who we ourselves are and yet remain as selfish as before.

How is this new love and life to become real in us? Let us read 2 Cor. 5:14 again; "...the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all". Paul thus turns to Calvary to the Man Who died there. It was the vision of Calvary that broke the heart of Paul and set free the torrent of divine love to flow through him. Is it not true that Calvary is not a reality to us? We sing about the cross and talk about the cross, yes, sing most solemn hymns about the cross and are not a bit moved, there is not a trace of tear. If only the Holy Spirit made the cross real to us it would be as if a deep spring in our being was touched whenever a reference was made to it.

The whole secret of the life which Paul lived, lay in the sight of Calvary which he had had. He had never actually seen the Lord Jesus die. He had not been an eye witness as Peter was of "the sufferings of Jesus:" and yet how was it that Paul preached the cross as he did? Because God gave him such an inward vision of it, that he never forgot it. When did Paul get his first sight of the cross? Let us turn for a moment to Acts 7:59,60. "...they stoned Stephen calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he ... cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge ..." Almost the same words the Lord Jesus said as He prayed for those who crucified Him. "...and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul" (v.58).

Saul the Pharisee caught sight of the spirit of the crucified Jesus in the martyr Stephen, and we may surely believe that it haunted him. The more it haunted him, the more exceedingly mad he was against the followers of the crucified Nazarene. But as he raged his way to Damascus that day, he met the living Christ, Who said to him, "Saul, Saul,... it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9:4,5). The sight of the spirit of Jesus in Stephen had gone straight to his heart, and it laid hold of him until at last he met the Living One, the Risen Christ. This is what changed Paul, and has changed some of our lives also.

We may call it "vision", and it may suggest only something exterior, but it is really the Spirit of God giving to our hearts such an unveiling of Calvary, and of the death of Christ, that we never lose it. Henceforth it dominates our lives. It was so real to the heart and life of Paul that the thought of it is constantly interwoven in his writings, as the Lord Jesus Himself explained to him the meaning of His death as we read in Gal. 1:11,12. The Lord make His death experientially true for us in an increasing measure. God helping we may continue this in our next issue.

God's servant Bro. Neville, together with the elders, Bro. Richard, Bro. Tony Periera and Bro. Mohanlal, and the saints of the Christian Fellowship Center, Colombo, would have us to thank the Lord for answered prayers for the Convocation needs, both spiritual and temporal, held in their midst from 23rd to 26th November. The Lord made it a time of blessing and spiritual refreshing for the four hundred or more, drawn together from the various parts of the island of Sri Lanka, speaking Tamil and Singala. Bro. Theodore Reginald spoke in the morning meetings. He emphasized that our God is faithful, as we read in I Cor. 1:9, which was the theme verse for the Convocation. Our God is faithful, first and foremost to cleanse us from all sin and unrighteousness

as we truly confess them, and also sanctify us wholly and preserve us blameless unto His coming (1 John 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:23,24). He was also burdened to stress on the salvation aspect of the sinner before he can enter into "the fellowship of His Son". Fellowship mentioned here can be rendered as "companionship with" or "participation with". This participation with His Son means active, intelligent, Scriptural partnership with Him, for the upbuilding of His Church, under His Lordship, as highlighted in the Apostle's message in Acts 2. Peter called them to repentance for the remission of sins and baptism. So three thousand publicly submitted, as those called into the fellowship of His Son, and they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, called out of Judaism and its laws, to be part of the Church of God, as the Corinthians were later in Corinth.

Thirteen brothers and sisters were baptized and about forty publicly decided for the Lord. The inspiring songs with the loving ministry of service and help of the local brothers and sisters of the Fellowship Centre, have been a great encouragement to the many who had come from various tea estates and small townships of Sri Lanka with its socio- economic and political problems.

Let us pray for the full recovery of God's servant Bro. Francis Vijayasingh of Winnepuwa assembly, about 40 kms. from the Fellowship Center. The Lord has been granting him His gracious touch, recovering him from total paralysis, so that he could share a brief word of testimony in the gathering.

Bro. Paul Sudhakar was restrained from ministry only in our fellowshipping churches, because of his unwillingness to respond to our request, for the setting aside of some of his teachings. This was notified in the Hebron Messenger, dated 17th September 2006. Now that Bro. Paul Sudhakar has started worship service independently in Hyderabad, he and others fellowshipping with him, or inviting him for any ministry, would be putting themselves out of working relationship with us.

Praying that we may be enabled to continue and conduct ourselves as exemplary ambassadors for Christ, living not unto ourselves but unto Him, constrained by His love and controlled by His Headship in the Church,

2 Cor. 5 : 14,15,20, Acts 16:7,10, Ezek 1:9,20

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K.PHILLIP.

FAMINE AND HARVEST - 3 BAKHT SINGH

Boaz was not only a very wealthy man, but he was also a remarkably godly man. See the words of his greeting to his reapers : 'The Lord be with you". It is not usual for a wealthy man to greet his servants in this fashion. Generally, when a rich boss visits the work spot, the workers stand up and bow to him. But here we find rich Boaz greeting his labourers, "The Lord be with you"; and the workmen reply in unison, 'The Lord bless you'. This was an unusual field. The owner of the field was a God- fearing man, and so also were all the labourers in that field.

It was the Lord who led Ruth by His skilful hands to the fields of Boaz; and very soon she was made conscious that she was in an unusual (shall we say 'sacred'?) place. Here was something of that spiritual reality for which she had been longing.

As Ruth went about that field, she could sense the difference in the people around her. There was no smoking, no foolish jesting, and no vulgar conversation such as are common among workmen, whether in the factory or in the fields. There was not even an unbecoming word on the lips of

these men. It was indeed an unusual field.

Ruth had gone to Bethlehem with the earnest desire to know more about the God of Israel. The God of Israel took note of this desire, and in His sovereign grace led her to a company of devout people, and to Boaz, a God-fearing man, who was able to help her in her quest for God.

We see from this how when we have the desire to know the Lord more intimately, and to do His will, the Lord will lead us to people through whom we can be helped spiritually. God knows how to satisfy our deepest longings. This He does by bringing us in touch with His people, who will give us the Christian fellowship which we need, and who are able to help us understand the truths of God's Word.

"It has been fully shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband : and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore" (Ruth. 2:11). This was the way Boaz greeted Ruth at their first meeting. See also the way the servant introduced Ruth to Boaz. "It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi" (Ruth 2.6). These instances show that in the very short period Ruth had been in Bethlehem, people had come to know of her devotion to the Lord and of her great longing for spiritual things. The people of God had taken note of her love and sacrifice for the Lord, and were speaking about these qualities in her.

Remember dear child of God, that if your devotion and, love for the Lord are sincere, and if you are prepared for any sacrifice in order to know Him more intimately, your fellow-believers will notice this fact, and it will be a sweet savour for the Lord, wherever you go.

More important than that, Boaz noticed this sweet savour about her. Mark his words in chapter 2:12 : "The ... God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust". Before she spoke a word to him about her great longing, Boaz understood that she had come to put her trust under the wings of the God of Israel. It was this, which brought her into his favour, and eventually made her his wife.

Most of all GOD noticed the sweet fragrance of her character. Ruth had come to Israel with the desire to know more about the God of Israel. The God of Israel took note of her sincerity of purpose, and blessed her. He favoured her to such an extent that she became the grandmother of Israel's great king David, and thus was made a link in His eternal plan to bring forth His Son into the world. God blessed Ruth; and in blessing her, many others were blessed through her. She thus proved in her life the truth of Jer. 29:13, "ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart".

We find from the foregoing how when we have an earnest desire to know more about the Lord, and have an hunger for God's Word, the Lord will make full provision to satisfy our longing and bless many others through us.

The book of Ruth begins with a famine and ends with a note of triumph and rejoicing. If your life has become barren and unfruitful, search yourself to find out the cause of this famine. It may be that you are away from fellowship; or you are too busy with your worldly activities and you have cut short your prayer time. Whatever be the cause of the barrenness, which has come into your life, there is no need for you to remain in this barren condition. If you turn back to the Lord in sincere repentance, the Lord will forgive you, and turn your sorrow into joy, and your tears into laughter. He will help you to recover every loss. May the Lord make it so in your life. (Concluded)

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NO 26

HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL

THE WONDERFUL GIFT

The Lord Jesus is the wonderful gift of God unto us. Is it not wonderful how greatly God loved this world of filthy and rebellious sinners and gave to it the best gift He could, that is, His only and beloved Son, so pure and faultless, so holy and beautiful? The Lord Jesus has been given to us to be our sacrifice. He died for our sins and has redeemed us with His precious blood. He has been given to us to be our friend and guide, our Lord and our King.

Let us consider this wonderful gift God has given to us to make us rich and eternally blessed; and with hearts full of gratitude let us praise and thank God. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

THE WONDERFUL PERSON

Who is this 'Son' who is given to us? The prophet Isaiah says, "...The government shall be upon his shoulder". This includes every kind of government both in heaven and upon earth. No one will be equal to the Son. He is going to be acknowledged alone as the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

His "name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor" (Isa. 9:6). If you have ever met the Lord Jesus and accepted Him as your own personal Saviour, you also will be able to say how wonderful He is to you every day and in every problem of your life; you will also be able to say how good and precious counsel He has given you in all your trials.

And now listen carefully dear friend, the prophet Isaiah, goes on to say, that His Name shall also be called, "the mighty God, The everlasting Father." This Son Who has been given to us is not only a preacher or a teacher or even an angel. He is nothing less than "the mighty God and the everlasting Father".

THE WONDERFUL BIRTH

If the Word of God had not told it to us so very clearly, we would have found it hard to believe that this wonderful Son of God Who is also the mighty God and the everlasting Father, was actually born in a manger in Bethlehem to a poor virgin called Mary, who was betrothed to a carpenter called Joseph. It is truly a wonder of wonders.

But why did this take place? The answer is this. He became poor so that you might become rich. He became sin so that you might receive the righteousness of God. He suffered and died so that your sins may be forgiven. He became the man of sorrows so that you might receive joy unspeakable and full of glory. May the Lord help us to understand this wonder.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

The same Lord Jesus rose again from the dead. Now He is called the Prince of Peace. He and He alone can grant you peace. In the midst of the storms and confusions of this world, the Lord Jesus can give you His own peace which the world cannot take away. If you receive the Prince you will also receive the peace. He will wipe away your tears. He will deliver you out of all your fears. Nothing is impossible to Him. He will give you victory over all your troubles and bless you with peace.

May the Prince of Peace receive a place in your heart today and turn your darkness into light, and your sorrow into everlasting joy.

Wonderful, wonderful, Jesus is to me, Counsellor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace is He, Saving me and keeping me

From all sin and shame;

Wonderful is my Redeemer, Praise His name!

CEO.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

**Hebron
Golconda Crossroads
Hyderabad – 500020, A.P., India
Telephone No: 27613066, 14-12-2006.**

Dear Fellow -Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, concerning whose birth prophet Isaiah had predicted, "... Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (7:14). And also in chapter 9, in measured majestic words the prophet highlights His deity and eternity of His Throne as follows, "For unto us a child is born ... and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace". May He keep us in perfect peace as our minds are stayed on Him, trusting Him, as we are brought to the threshold of a New Year (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; 26:3,12).

The season ahead is marked with the remembrance of the birth of the world's Saviour, although the Scripture is silent about the date of His coming into the world. We read in Gal.4:4,5 the predetermined plan and the purpose of His coming into the world according to prophecy. 'But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons'.

The Bible is all about God — yes, but it is about God and His relationship with man, and man's relationship with Him. It is all about God's Son — and yet is all about the concern of God's Son for man. We should not be interested in a remote God, outside the realm of human life.

Somehow God's interests are inexplicably bound up with man — his vocation and destiny. All this may be gathered into the mystery of Incarnation. If we ask, why the Incarnation, the answer is threefold. Firstly, for the redemption or the reclamation of man. Secondly, for the reconstruction or the reconstitution of man. And thirdly, for the perfection and glorification of man.

The common idea of redemption is associated with the slave market, and buying or buying back, redeeming that which has been sold unto some one. The Scripture says, "we are sold under sin". The question arises, 'Who sold him'? The answer is, 'He sold himself'. He sold himself subjectively. He sold himself in his soul. He actually sold his soul to the devil, listening to his suggestions and insinuation, and disobeying God as our first parents in the garden, doubting the goodness of God. It has led man into spiritual death as we read in Rom. 5:12, "... as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned". Unbelief which is the root of all sin, brings the natural man into union with Satan, until it is shattered when the soul accepts by faith the redemptive work accomplished once for all by Jesus Christ on the cross. The Incarnation was to provide redemption for man in a MAN and not only for man but by a MAN. It is a great thing to see not only what Jesus DID, but what He WAS to meet the situation. Incarnation was for the express purpose of begetting a 'new creation'. It means that man now is indwelt by the Spirit of God, and is possessing eternal life. The Lord Jesus not only effected that as an accomplishment, but was also Himself the first of that order to beget another race of that kind. But how in Christ, His deity and humanity unite in one, no one is able to explain. Christ not only did wonders, but was Himself a wonder indeed! How can we comprehend the riddle of riddles, the intersection in time of two parallels, the organic harmonious union of the Infinite and the finite! O, come let us adore Him, the only begotten Son, Who through Incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and exaltation has become the "first begotten of the dead" (Rev. 1:5), "the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29) — even Mary's "firstborn son" (Luke 2:7).

The Lord granted us a profitable and refreshing time with our fellow-workers from Telangana area, and a few from other places, as we gathered for a time of prayer and meditation of the Word at New Jerusalem, Sangareddy. God's servant Bro. Andrews besides others helped in the ministry and activity of those gatherings held on the 5th and 6th December. In the afternoon of 6th December some of us participated in the dedication service of the branch assembly of B.H.E.L., named Hermon, held in its new construction. God willing, the next Telangana servants' gatherings are to be held on the 23rd and 24th January 2007, in the Prayer House at B.H.E.L.

The following God's servants were united in marriage on the 6th December at Bhadrachalam — Bro. Man Mohan Bathra with Sis. Sānthosa, Bro. Jonathan with Sis. Santha Kumari, Bro. Ezekiel with Sis. Jaya Grace, Bro. Joshua with Sis. Sunitha and Bro. Timothy with Sis. Priscilla. Bro. G.T. Benjamin shared the Word on that occasion. Pray for their future ministry. Also pray for Sis. Salomi, (daughter of Bro. B.C. John, the Lord's servant at Sanathnagar) who was united in marriage with Bro. John Wesley on the 5th December.

God's servant and Elder in the church at Jehovah — Shammah, Bro. Eddy Williams, covets prayers for the marriage of his son Joseph Ephraim with Sis. Elizabeth Glory, youngest daughter of Bro. Earnest Dhanaraj, Vellore, to be solemnized God willing, at Jehovah — Shammah on the 22nd December.

Do pray for the servants and ministers of God who will be participating in the ministry of the Holy Convocation, God willing, from 16th to 24th December at El-Shaddai, Kalimpong, especially Bros. Lazar Sen, T.E. Koshy, Theodore Reginald, J.C. Rao and myself besides others. Pray that the Lord may open the Scriptures to His ministers, to speak as they ought to.

Pray for the senior sisters who have been ministering in the church at Jehovah — Shammah, from its beginning. Pray for Sis. Jaba Samuel undergoing radiation treatment. Also Sis. Prema as she has to undergo an abdominal surgery.

Though belated, we mention the Home-call of our Bro. Paramananda Kumar, on' 8th October. He was functioning as an Elder at the El — Bethel church, Villiwalkam for several years. The Lord has been pleased to bless his cassette ministry (five volumes of Songs of Zion), throughout Andhra Pradesh. The church misses a faithful minister and steward in his

departure which was so sudden. He rests from his labour and his works do follow him as we read in Rev. 14:13. Let us pray for the comfort of his family members.

There would be special services in the assemblies of our land for the season ahead, and for the year ending and New Year day. Let us pray for the many who are being sent as special messengers from Hebron as well as other centers that the Lord may accomplish His Word ministered through them according to Isaiah 55:11, for the upbuilding of His saints.

Pray for God's servant Bro. Timothy who is now ministering in Dubai, for a period often days.

The following are the verses of the Motto Text for 2007.

"Be of good cheer; it is I" (Matt. 14:27)

"Be not afraid; ..for the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chron. 20:15)

"Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:1)

Praying that the God of all grace Who hath called us to eternal glory by Christ Jesus may be pleased to inspire and strengthen us through these promises as well as others we may receive on the 31st December, to serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear,

I Cor. 1 :9, 2 Cor 7:1, Matt 24:44-46.

I remain, Yours in His grace,

K.PHILLIP.

THE CHURCH OF GOD BAKHT SINGH

There is a genuine inquiry among servants of God and other witnesses of the Lord, regarding the fuller meaning of the Church which the Lord Jesus Christ is building to show forth His manifold wisdom unto powers and principalities in heavenly places according to Ephesians 3:10. In a number of places many questions are asked by different people about the spiritual meaning of His Church. To know the meaning of His Church, one must know, first of all, what is the foremost thought in God's mind in having such a vessel. This is very beautifully illustrated in the story of the prophet Elisha, after Elijah was taken up to heaven by a whirlwind. We read in 2 Kings 2:19-22: "And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my Lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren. And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake".

In the days of Elisha the land of Jericho was completely barren, even though the situation of the city was very pleasant. Elisha took a new cruse, and put some salt inside it. He cast that small quantity of salt into the spring of water, and all the water of the spring was completely healed. Even today one can see beautiful palm trees all around Jericho. God wants such a Church which will eventually take away all the effects of the curse of sin upon the earth and let people enjoy His fullness fully.

We will be able to understand in a practical way our share in the building of His Church upon the earth, if we meditate upon the seven names which the Apostle Paul gives to God's chosen

people in his epistle to the Ephesians. The first name is in Ephesians 1:22, where God's people are called "the church". You will notice that nowhere in the Scriptures is a building called "a Church", as is the common custom at present among all kinds of Christians throughout the world. According to Acts 2:47, those who are saved by the grace of God are made members of the Church by the Lord Himself. The literal meaning of the word 'Church' in the Greek language is, "a people called out, or a people drawn out" by God's mighty hand. We read in Psalm 40:2, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings". The second name is "the Body of Christ" (Ephesians 1:23). In the human body all the members are necessary and are equally important. They can be fully useful only when they are kept under the complete control of the head. According to Colossians 1:18, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the body. In a healthy body the lifeblood will flow freely into every member, and all the members will be mutually dependent upon each other.

The third name is "One New Man" (Ephesians 2:15,16). Through the Lord Jesus Christ we can fully overcome all our national and manmade differences. These differences are so hard to die, that on one occasion even Peter, the Apostle, had to be rebuked by Paul because he refused to eat with the Gentile converts (Galatians 2:11-14). Only the Living Christ, living in us and working in us very deeply, will enable us to enjoy in fullness such oneness.

The fourth name is "Heavenly Citizens" and "Household of God" (Ephesians 2:19). As heavenly citizens, we are able to serve each other and bear our burdens together; and as members of the heavenly family, we can enjoy divine love and fullness through each other.

The fifth name is "God's Building" (Ephesians 2:20-22 and I Cor. 3:9). We see in Hebrews 3:6 the Lord Jesus Christ is building God's House with our co-operation. Can we build God's building on man's plan? We see in God's Word that Moses had to be alone with God on the mount for forty days and forty nights before he could see the pattern of the tabernacle (Exodus 24:15-18). Similarly, David had to go through every kind of affliction for eight years before God could give him in writing, by His Hand upon him, the pattern of the Temple (1 Chronicles 28:19). Unless we are fully prepared to be free from every kind of human custom and man-made tradition we will not be able to understand clearly God's plan for His Church. We see in these days that much Christian work is being done with human wisdom, not in God's plan, and that is why one sees barrenness everywhere.

The sixth name is "God's Habitation" or "Dwelling Place" (Ephesians 2:22). God wants a dwelling place where He can love His people freely and can be loved by them freely. For example, would any body call the building where he works as his home? No; because only the place where his wife and children live he would call his home; there he can enjoy the love of all the members of his family very freely. Unless people are conscious of God's presence and love in the House of God they will not be fully happy and free. In the House of God, His love should be fully tasted.

The seventh name is "the Bride of Christ" (Ephesians 5:32 and Revelation 19:7-8). Unless the bridegroom and the bride are fully of one mind in every thing they will not enjoy the happiness of married life. Our Lord wants us to be perfectly one with Him so that we may enjoy fully all that He has prepared for us to be enjoyed throughout eternity. May the Lord show every one of us our respective share in the building of the Church.