

Hebron Messenger

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NO 3

SPIRITUALITY IN THE MIDST OF AN EVIL SOCIETY

Some thoughts from the witness of Daniel and his companions
See also 1 John 4:4 and 5:19

The first six chapters of Daniel illustrate very beautifully the word of Paul in Phil. 2:15 about being "blameless and harmless, the sons of God... in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation". Daniel and his companions certainly "shone" as "lights in the world" when set in the midst of a devil-controlled Babylon, and, as such, they can teach us many vital principles relative to such a witness in our day.

Many such "principles" could be cited, but the OUTSTANDING one is that this witness was being given by what we could call "Resurrection Men". To use the words of Paul, they were continually "delivered unto death", -yet ever manifesting "Another Life"! (See 2 Cor. 4:11). There was the fiery furnace (chapter 3), and the den of lions (chapter 6), -each a virtual "death" in itself, yet leading on to "resurrection". Even before that, we remember how they positively flourished when they were under the eye of Melzar in the king's palace (chapter 1). They had deliberately chosen the way of threatening "death", yet emerged with the glow of Abundant Life. And, even before that, again, when they first survived the destruction of Jerusalem, emerging from the burning city, they were like "resurrection men".

This, we suggest, is the BASIC and All pervading Principle if we, in OUR day, are to be part of God's true LIGHT in the world's darkness, certainly if we are to be seen as HIS "Testimony" amidst the decadence of today's "Babylon", or, shall we say, "unspiritual religion" of ANY kind. We have to be men of the Cross; -His Cross, and thereby MEN OF RESURRECTION; -and, most of all, in an INWARD sense; -our own strengths crucified, our own wisdom set aside, and CHRIST our ALL in ALL! Resurrection means an "old man" crucified, and Christ discovered as the Great Divine Replacement; -it is blessing through brokenness.

This, we see, is the clear teaching of God's Word regarding the Church; -it is created to be the expression of Christ's own resurrection. Years ago, we heard it said that the ONE WORD which characterises the true Church is the word "RESURRECTION", and that we have seen is true! But, first of all, it means that individuals must "take up-the cross", in this INWARD way, discovering the blessedness of Romans Six,

"Dying with-Jesus, -by death RECKONED mine; Living with Jesus a New Life Divine" (See Rom.6:11)

Thank God for the Holy Spirit Who works all this progressively into us -as we "believe"! And this is the way for "assemblies" as well as individuals, -and thus God secures His "Light in the Darkness", His way of touching "Babylon"!

And, how encouraging that God got this "Witness" in those who were but YOUNG men; -perhaps little more than teenagers in Daniel's day! O for such a FRESH witness in OUR times! O for young Joshuas who can complete the work of Moses, and young Timothys who can re-echo, in the Spirit, the messages of Paul! The history of young Daniel and his companions teaches us that "God is

able". May the Lord do it in our day!

C.R.G.

LETTER FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

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Dear Fellow -Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who has promised to set His Tabernacle among us, walk among us and be our God. Among the many blessings He has promised to His covenant-keeping people of the seed of Abraham, from the beginning of chapter 26 of Leviticus, verse 9 reads, " I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful . May the Lord enable us all to come into the reality and realisation of being made fruitful spiritually, according to His calling and purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord, in our family and church life, from the beginning of the year (Lev.26:11, 12; Gen.17:1 ,6; John 15:1,5,6; Col.1:10,11).

John chapter 15 contains deep spiritual truths from the message of the vine which the Lord gave to us, who are in the blessings of the new covenant established through His shed blood. The beautiful lessons of faith, spiritual growth and fruitfulness are well illustrated by the analogy of the grapevine. Verse 5 of the same chapter says, "...without me ye can do nothing". In everything the life of the branch is to be the exact counterpart of the vine. Of Himself Jesus had said, "...The Son can do nothing of himself" (John 5:19). As the Son He did not receive His life for all His works once for all from the Father, but moment by moment. His life was a continual waiting on the Father, for all that He was to do. And so Christ says of us, His disciples, "You can do nothing apart from Me:' He means this literally. To everyone who wants to live the true disciple life, to bring forth fruit and glorify God, this is the message: "You can do nothing". What He had said, "...He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit", is hereby enforced. "Abiding in Me is indispensable, for you know that, of yourself you can do nothing to maintain and act out heavenly life".

A deep conviction of the truth of this word lies at the very root of a strong spiritual life. As little as I created myself, as little as I could raise a man from the dead, can I give myself, the divine life. As little as I can give divine life to myself, can I maintain or increase it. Every motion is the work of God through Christ and His Spirit. It is as a man believes this, that he will take up that position of entire and continual dependence, which is the very essence of the life of faith.

With the spiritual eye the believer sees Christ, supplying grace every moment for every breathing and every deepening of the spiritual life. Our whole heart should thus say Amen to the word, "You can do nothing". And just because we affirm so, we can also say, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." This sense of helplessness and the abiding to which it compels, leads to true fruitfulness and diligence in good works. The Lord helping, we may continue this later.

The news of the following ministries of our fellow-workers and ministers of the word reach you late; however pray for the fulfillment of Isa. 55:11 through them. Bro. John Stewart had a profitable time in the ministry at Bethany, Baroda, from 23 rd January for three days, followed by a day for youth, when about 300 participated, even from the churches around. He would have us to pray for his son Emmanuel who is now in U.S.A. for three months for special training in his company.

The annual Youth Camp held at El-Shaddai, I Kalimpong, from 15th to 20th January, was very profitable for salvation, and the work of restoration among the 2000 who participated. Bro. Theodore Reginald took the main ministries, while Bros. Shammah, Pradeep, Hanock Sen and Joseph Canara

(from Ahmedabad) also shared in the ministry helpfully.

Bro. M.D. Paul and saints of Nandyal would have us to thank and praise the Lord for the blessings of the dedication service of their Prayer House, Bethany, at Sanjeevnagar, Nandyal. Bros. G. T. Benjamin and myself, with Bro. John Stewart were enabled to share the ministry for the next day, the Lord's day, at Bethel, the main assembly.

Bro. G.T. Benjamin with others was enabled to have the Bethel Prayer House at humnabad dedicated. Many servants of God from Karnataka and other areas were enabled to participate in this service on 31 st January in thankful fellowship.

We would value your prayers as I with family am planning to go to Singapore for a few days' ministry, for which they have been requesting since several years, leaving Chennai on 4th to return on the 12th February, God willing, as these days fall in line with their holidays. Pray that the Lord may grant us His word, based on the theme, "Walk worthy of God" (1 Thess. 2:12).

Please pray for the little flock gathering at El-Bethel Prayer House at Akkuppally, a remote village in Srikakulam District of A.P. Bro. R.S. Kuruvilla from Coimbatore with Bro. Dyva Prasad from Tirupathi shared in the ministry. Pray for the labours of Bro. Elia, God's servant there. Bro. Dyva Prasad and others are seeking to develop the work in the border of Orissa and nearby places.

With a sense of sorrow and loss we mention the Home call of Sis. Deenamma John, on 27 th January. She had been sick and ailing for several months of late, with periods of hospitalisation. As a handmaiden of the Lord for the service and ministry of the Gospel, she was in Hebron for the past four decades, with her eldest sister, Sis. Daisy, and elder sister Sis. Sowmyamma. The Lord was pleased to use her with other sisters in the weekly door-to-door ministry of the Gospel, reaching different areas in the twin cities from morning till evening, and sometimes even to outstations. Hundreds of rupees worth Gospel portions are sold in each trip and needy souls contacted, especially women. What Paul wrote in Phil. 4:3, can be said of her, "...those women which laboured... in the gospel... whose names are in the book of life", and the saying of the Lord in Mark 14:8, "She hath done what she could...". Pray for the comfort of her sisters, and believers who miss her.

Bro. Samuel, the Lord's servant who laboured for a long period in Sadashivpeta and of late had been sharing the responsibilities and leadership in the Bethel assembly at Dargah, was promoted to Glory on 3rd February. He rests from his labours according to Rev. 14:13. Pray for the comfort of his wife.

Praying that the Lord may help us all to abide in Him, obey and serve Him, that we may be fruitful

in every good work, word and deed,

I remain,
Yours in his grace,
K. Philip

YE ARE MY FRIENDS--3 Bakht Singh

If you want to climb the mountain top of friendship with God and if you want to enjoy the friendship of God, be prepared to be proved and tried by God's own testings, as He proved Abraham (Gen. 22:1).

When a watchmaker wants to use a piece of steel for a watch spring, he has to put the steel through many tests before using it. Only the watchmaker knows what kind of spring is required for the watch. In the same way, when any metal is to be used for an aeroplane, that piece of metal will be first proved by many tests. It is only then that the metal will be fit for use in the aeroplane. In the same way,

God Who alone knows our real ministry on earth and in heaven, has to apply every kind of test in our lives, so that we may be found fit and worthy. We as believers should never question or doubt God, demanding of Him why this or that has happened in our lives. Believe me, every test, however severe, is very necessary to the one who desires to be a friend of God. Some of the tests will be very painful, and the enemy will try to suggest that you are being punished by God for your failure in the past. If however, you have understood God's purpose, then remember, you are forgiven completely. When you have confessed your sins and have put things right with God and man, then your sins are forgiven, covered and washed. His grace will never dig them up again. Your part is to be faithful and sincere in your repentance and confession, and obey God, putting all things right, with your fellowmen. Afterwards let God try and prove you by any test. All the saints of God, down the world's history, have been proved in different ways, and were found faithful.

We read that when God called Abraham, he said, "Behold, here I am!" He could not have said that so quickly in the beginning, but he had been prepared by God for forty -six years. His ears had become sensitive to the voice of God. God spoke and he heard and responded immediately. He did not say, "Lord, give me five or ten minutes!" Many people hear God speaking in a meeting or in their quiet time or in prayer time, but they answer, "God! Please give me ten minutes; I will consult my darling wife and give you a definite reply. She is a very good wife and the best woman in the whole world. Please God, just wait for a few minutes and I will ask her permission and then come:' Abraham did not say, "Let me consult Sarah and then I will come to you," for he had been truly prepared by God. In a subtle way the devil has deceived many God's servants, teachers and believers. They allow some man, some woman, some relation to come between God and themselves. But Abraham's answer was, "Behold, here am I", which meant: "Oh God! I am fully ready, and prepared. You tell me and I will do it:' If you are not clear as to God's voice, then wait, because in some cases it takes a month or two, or more to know God's will. But when God speaks and commands, you must say at once, "Behold, I am here:'

In Gen. 22:3 we read, "Abraham rose up early in the morning:' Isaac was Sarah's son also, and no doubt his mother must have loved him more dearly than even Abraham did. But without consulting Sarah, Abraham was ready to take Isaac as God had commanded. Some may say that the customs in India and in America are different. You may say that American wives are different from Indian wives. They demand everything! -and to maintain peace, men have to tell everything to their wives! It may be an American wife, English wife, or an Indian wife; a graduate wife or an illiterate wife, the divine law is the same for every country. In the work of God, and the things of God, it is the same divine law that is operative. If you make any alteration in any divine law, you will bring great weakness in your testimony and loss in your ministry. You could never say that Abraham did not love Sarah, or that Sarah did not love Abraham. God spoke first to Abraham, and though he loved Sarah, he had already learned a lesson that he should not listen to his wife before obeying God. It was Sarah who had advised him to go to Hagar. Without consulting God he had obeyed her, and the mistake of that day is still being seen and felt in the whole world in the seed of Ishmael.. Divine laws are not to be trifled with. Abraham had learned that lesson, that when God speaks, He must be obeyed. So without consulting any person, he obeyed God immediately. We must never try to change divine laws by human wisdom.

At God's command Abraham went to the land of Moriah. "Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off" (Gen. 22:4). He did not tell even Isaac what he was going to do with him. We do not find the least anxiety in the heart of Abraham. When Isaac questioned him about the offering he said, "My son, God will provide" (verse 8). He was not avoiding Isaac's question. When he said that God would provide, he actually believed that the Lord would provide. Literally the meaning of Moriah is, "God will provide". Here we see the kind of faith that had been created and developed in the heart of Abraham. The true friendship that God offers depends upon a strong, living and simple faith. Alas! for most of us, we have no faith. Even though we talk about faith, and preach and sing about faith, when we face the actual test, we have no faith. We know how the devil again and again brings some doubt into our hearts. Even though we have proved God on many occasions and many times He has given us victory over the enemy's devices, doubts still come into our hearts. Before holding a Holy Convocation we have so many questions in our mind. We ask ourselves, "What will happen tomorrow? We have prepared for only a thousand guests for the Holy Convocation". Suddenly panic comes in. "What about Wednesday? What about Thursday?" And for a short time there will be panic and doubt. Then we remember that for the past several years we have been having many Holy Convocations, and every year God has not only met every need but also allowed us never to keep any bill waiting for payment, nor have we refused anyone. God meets every need without hints of any kind. Even so at times we have known that for a few minutes a little doubt comes in till the Lord reassures us

with His promise that He will surely provide.

In the same way, we often find that when we are asked to give a message we feel so dry, empty and weak. The throat gets dry and the brain tired. But when we seek His face He provides His message. You will find the same in every test. I know it by experience. He is faithful. I have seen some people very worried as their families increase. They begin to wonder how they will clothe their children, or educate them, or get them married. If they are girls, the problem is still worse. I am talking about believing parents and even God's servants. Yet surely if God can provide for one, He can provide for ten children. Where is your faith? Whenever God blesses, He provides. Whatsoever burden we may have to bear, He gives abundant grace, yea, extra grace for that burden. Abraham knew these words were spoken by God and not by man. That is why he was prepared to do as God told him. God said, "Take your son!" and he took him. He took wood also. Then God told him to build an altar, and he built it, without any question or doubt in his mind. That is real friendship with this mighty God. When God says, "Yes!" I say, "Yes", and when God says, "No", I say "No". When God says, "Go!" I go, when He says, "Stay", I stay and when He says, "Speak", I speak. You find that such friendship will carry you up every mountain. Your sufferings and trials are all preparation for such a friendship.

(To be contd.)

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NO 4

NUMBERING OUR DAYS

"Psalm 90:1-17; Eph. 5:15-17; Matt. 20:1-8

In the light of eternity our life upon this earth is brief. Therefore we need to live wisely, redeeming the time and doing the will of God. According to Psalm 90:12, we have to ask the Lord to teach us to number our days so that we can live wisely during this short life upon this earth. When we make sure of this, we can live joyfully (Psa. 90:14, 15), live a life of real satisfaction in doing God's will (v. 14), a life which reveals God's glory (v.16), and be formed into God's beauty (v.17). Now we want to see how God counts our days, so that we may make sure our days are not wasted in our spiritual journey on this earth.

Psalm 90 contains the prayer of Moses the man of God, Who led the people of God, the Israelites, after He redeemed them from Egypt. In the wilderness he saw the wrath of God on the people when they rebelled against Him and also saw His loving kindness when they repented and turned to Him. Therefore, in this prayer he says, "...teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (v. 12).

God does not count our days according to the calendar. In His numbering, only some days are counted and others rejected. The years spent without God i.e. without salvation are not counted by Him. We can see this from Genesis chapters 4 and 5. The genealogy of Cain, who sinned against God is very brief, but the genealogy of Seth, the descendant of Adam, is given in full detail because his descendants were righteous before God; they communed with Him and pleased Him (4:25,26). This shows that God counts our days only after we repent of our sins and become righteous before Him.

When the children of Israel came out of Egypt God said, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Exo. 12:2). Because they were redeemed from Egypt through the slain lamb and the blood that was sprinkled, it was counted as a new beginning in their lives before the Lord. In the light of this, we can count our spiritual age before God. We may be twenty, thirty or forty years old physically but our spiritual age can be very less, because it is counted before God only after we are born again. So we need to make sure that we have put our faith in the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shed His precious blood for the remission of our sins.

Even after being born again, some days are not numbered before God - He looks upon them as wasted days and therefore they are not credited. For example, in the case of Israelites, the period from the time of their exodus to the building of Solomon's temple in the fourth year of his reign, was 573 years according to Acts 13: 18-22, i.e. 40 years in the wilderness, plus 450 years upto Samuel, plus 40 years of Saul's reign, plus 40 years of David's reign, plus 3 years of Solomon's reign before he started building the temple. However according to 1 Kings 6:1, the same period is counted as 480 years. We see the difference of 93 years. Why this discrepancy? Both the records of Acts 13 and 1 Kings 6 are correct. Then how do we account for these missing 93 years? The answer is found in the book of Judges. For 93 years the children of Israel were oppressed by the heathen nations and they came under their servitude because they had disobeyed God. The details are as follows.

1.They served Chushan - rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia for 8 years (Judges 3:8).

2. They served Eglon, the king of Moab for 18 years (Judges 3:14)

3. They served Jabin, king of Canaan for 20 years (4:1-3).

4. They served under the hand of Midian for 7 years (6: 1).

5. They served under the hand of Philistines for 40 years (13.1)

This brings the total to exactly 93 years.

In Acts 13 Paul was narrating the mere history of the Israelites, but in 1 Kings 6:1 the emphasis is on their condition before God, therefore the 93 years are excluded. This shows the principle on which God numbers the years of His children. They were redeemed people who belonged to God, but they sinned against Him and came under bondage of the enemies, and could not serve God. Those years during which they did not serve the Lord were considered lost. This is a solemn warning to us. We can also be enslaved by similar enemies when we disobey and rebel against the Lord. We must stand in the liberty with which the Lord has made us free, serving Him alone and not give room to the enemy, the flesh and the world. In Acts 13 Paul was narrating the mere history of the Israelites, but in 1 Kings 6:1 the emphasis is on their condition before God, therefore the 93 years are excluded. This shows the principle on which God numbers the years of His children. They were redeemed people who belonged to God, but they sinned against Him and came under bondage of the enemies, and could not serve God. Those years during which they did not serve the Lord were considered lost. This is a solemn warning to us. We can also be enslaved by similar enemies when we disobey and rebel against the Lord. We must stand in the liberty with which the Lord has made us free, serving Him alone and not give room to the enemy, the flesh and the world.

Let us examine and see how we can also be brought into bondage to the same kind of enemies whom the Israelites served.

1. Mesopotamia- Abraham left Mesopotamia to obey and follow the Lord. We too have to leave the world and come out of it. This speaks of our pilgrim character as those who are separated from the world and are moving towards heaven (2 Corinthians 6: 17, 18).

2. Moab-They were the descendants of Lot; " they speak of a cursed life, because they were riot allowed to enter into God's congregation for ten generations (Deut. 23:3). They also speak of the deception of the flesh.

3. Canaan -speaks of idolatry in any form. We have to beware of allowing anything or any person in our lives taking the place of God. These come in subtle forms.

4. Midian -means contention. It speaks of competing with God's will in our lives. We have to obey the will of God at any cost. This may mean losing certain things in this present life, but being in God's will ensures eternal security for us.4. Midian -means contention. It speaks of competing with God's will in our lives. We have to obey the will of God at any cost. This may mean losing certain things in this present life, but being in God's will ensures eternal security for us.

5. Philistines -were uncircumcised; they speak of uncircumcised hearts. It means, death to the flesh has not fully worked in our lives. We cannot serve God with fleshly mind and with our old nature by refining it. The death of the cross applied to our lives only can deliver us from the activities of the flesh.

We have to search our hearts and see how many days since our new birth have been actually credited by God. What discount had God to make in our days? How many wasted days were there? We must realize that if we are in bondage to any of the above enemies, i.e. if we live according to our human will, being away from God, defeated and fallen, those days will not be numbered by Him. So let us honestly ask ourselves since the time of our new birth experience, how many days are wasted and how any days have been numbered by God.

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Dear Fellow-Believers in Christ,

Greetings in the precious and prevailing Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, Who has prevailed and is enthroned, "the head over all things to the church." May we be enabled to appropriate by faith, the exceeding greatness of that power which raised Him and seated Him at the right hand of God, to deliver us from all our troubles and enable us to serve Him to the honour and glory of His Name (Rev. 5:5,6; Eph.1: 19-22; Psalm 91 :1, 15).

The second Motto Text for the year reads, "I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Psa. 91: 15). Looking into the 6th chapter of the letter to the Ephesians, we see what is going on in the spiritual realm, namely, the conflict with the rulers of the darkness of this world. This controversy and conflict are concerning the Church -the very life of the Church, the life of the very elect.

The work of the Lord Jesus in His Cross can be set forth in two respects. On the one hand, there is that which was actually complete and final, in that the Lord did destroy him that had the power of death, and also death itself. With regard to Himself, that is a finished work. His presence at the right hand of God declares that death, the grave and Satan have been brought to naught, and no longer have any power over Him. On the other hand, there is what we may call the potential work of His Cross, that is, that Christ did something which in Himself is full and final, but which has yet to become final in the saints. Something has been accomplished for the saints, but which has still to become complete in their experience. It is potential so far as the Church is concerned, although in Him, the Head, they have it in finality. As the result of the work of His Cross, and as the grand issue of His resurrection, eternal life is already received by those who believe. But while that life is itself victorious, incorruptible, indestructible, the believer has to come by faith to prove it, live by it, and to learn its laws to be conformed to it.

There is that deposit in the believer which in itself needs no addition, so far as its quality is concerned. So far as its victory, power, glory and potentialities are concerned, nothing can be added to it. But the course of spiritual experience, of spiritual life is to discover, appropriate and live by all that the life represents and means. That is to say, that the course of spiritual life and experience is the course of discovering and knowing by the values of that life, which is within and which is sent from above.

We are very often inclined to think that the life of the Lord in us needs in some way to be improved, to be added to, when really what is required is that we should discover what we have, and discovering it by experience, live according to it. This life is not something apart from the Lord Jesus, and we can never think of His standing in need of some improvement, nor of the possibility of something being added to Him, to make Him complete or more complete. We would never think like that. And this life is one with Himself. As the Apostle says, It is Christ Who is our life, and our need is to discover what Christ is in us and to live accordingly. So in a very real sense it is a matter of the life getting more of us, rather than our getting more of the life. That at any rate is the way of its working.

That, in the ordering of God, has to be done in a world where death still rules and works. In this world the destruction of death has not yet been made manifest. Death like the Devil goes on, although Calvary still remains full victory. We are left in this world, where death reigns and works as a great energy, and it is in this world we, by the sovereign ordering of God have to come to prove the values of the life which has been deposited in us, to discover its potentialities. This is an experimental discovery. It therefore resolves into a battle between that which is in this world, and the life which is in the believer. It is the battle for life; not as to the forfeiture of that life -not as to whether death can take eternal life away from us: that is not the question at issue -but as to the triumphant expression and the

full manifestation of the power of that life. That is the issue. We may have eternal life, and yet that life may be pressed away in our very being, without expression, without manifestation, without any triumphant issue. It may be there, but cramped and smothered. God helping we will consider this more later.

The saints and brethren in responsibility of the assembly Bethel, at Singapore -Bros. Albert John, Paul Subramaniam and Isaiah Timothy, with their helpers are thankful for answered prayers, in view of the special gatherings held in their midst from 6th to 13th February. About seventy attended the gatherings held in the rented facilities of the Bible House, 7 A, Armenian St., 4th Floor. The Lord granted us liberty to share the Word, with translation into Telugu although a few Tamil-speaking believers also are amongst them. They covet our prayers, to continue steadfastly on the basis of Acts 2:42 and be established and enlarged in Christ.

Bro. K.M. Matthew, one among the responsible brethren in the church Bethany, Pune, would have us to thank the Lord for the ministry shared by us and other servants to the glory of God, at the marriage of their son Shibu with Nissy (daughter of Bro. and Sis. K. Simon) on 14th February at Pune. The parents covet our prayers for their future.

The Lord granted us a profitable time at the gathering of the servants and responsible brethren of Maharashtra at Bethany, Pune, on the 15th and 16th February. Bro. G.T. Benjamin and myself shared the ministry for prayer and helpful counsels. It was also decided that such gatherings be held at Bethany only for some time more.

Bro. K.M. Samson (Proddatur) would have us to thank the Lord for the grace granted for the ministry in Bilaspur, Corba and Charod from 10th to 13th February. Pray for the believers who have moved into a new apartment at Charod for their fellowship, unhindered.

Though belated, we mention the Home -call of Sis. (Mrs.) Hemelytra on 18th January at Secunderabad. She together with her husband, late Bro. John Wesley was in fellowship with us for many years and helped us for some time in the Peace Of God Bible Correspondence Course ministry at Hebron. Pray for the members of the family.

Bro. M. Samuel, who was sharing the responsibility in the church Bethel at Nandyal, for several years was called Home on 3rd February. Pray for the family members.

Praying that amidst all the burdens and battles of our life in our service for His Church and the furtherance of His Testimony in the land, we may be assured of His presence and deliverance, and may stand fast,

2 Cor. 1 : 9-11,

Psa. 50: 15 ,

Col. 1 : 13, 14

I remain,
Yours in his grace,
K. Philip

YE ARE MY FRIENDS--4 Bakht Singh

In Genesis 18 God told Abraham how He was going to judge Sodom and Gomorrah, but now in chapter 22 God wanted to tell him what was going to happen through his seed. "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (v. 17,). That seed is the

Lord Jesus Christ and Abraham was thus a partaker of all the blessings which were to come through that Seed. He would enjoy the fruits of the victory of that Seed over all the enemies of God, and over all the powers of darkness. We too have the right in Him to enjoy the fruit of His victory, which will ensure not only a happy life upon the earth, but also a share in His triumphant victory over all the powers of darkness in heavenly places. That is what it means to be a friend of God.

Genesis 22:13 reveals something more of what the friendship of God had for Abraham. "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns...". The ram was caught in the thicket, not because it would run away somewhere. God would have made that very same ram to appear right before Abraham without being bound in a thicket. But God was teaching him some important lessons. After he had passed the final test, he saw the ram caught in the bush. This ram is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. God was saying to Abraham, "You have obeyed My voice. Now I am bound to bless you and your seed. Now command Me. Continue to command Me". "Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come ...concerning the work of my hands, command ye me" (Isa. 45:11). God is willing to bless us if we obey Him. Most of us want God to listen to us and work for us. But we do not obey Him. The Lord Jesus wants us to command from Him the blessing of God for all nations, and also victory over all enemies. God took Abraham on the mountain top, that he might learn how to command the best things from God for all the generations to come. Do you have a desire to climb that mountain of God's friendship? Do you want to be a friend of God? If so, you will find the whole secret revealed in the life of Abraham and especially in Genesis chapter 22.

(Concluded)

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