

Vineyard Echoes

A monthly Magazine
for the ministry of the Word and tidings
of the Lord's work in India

THE SEED IS THE WORD



THE FIELD IS THE WORLD

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THE INCOMPARABLE SON

The Lord Jesus Christ as the eternal son acts through creation and history. God has revealed Himself through His son. He is the theme of prophecy; He is the Judge administering the righteous law; He is the Source of the music of Psalms; He is the Central Figure of the Gospels; He is the authority of the Acts and truly He is the subject of the epistles. No book can contain the infinite treasure of the revelation of God in His son.

Almost 700 years before He was born into this world, God spoke to Isaiah to record of it. "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" (9:6). His humanity and His diety appeal to us with considerable force. His majesty and glory captivate us. He is the Mighty God the Everlasting Father - the Omnipotent, Supreme ruler, Eternal Himself. Vine comments, "There is a two-fold revelation in this (1) He inhabits and possesses eternity (Isaiah 57:15); (2) He is loving, tender, compassionate, an all wise Instructor, Trainer and Provider". He was born poor in a manger, but His birth was not an ordinary one - even the Heavens celebrated. The Star appeared to the wise men of the east and the angel appeared to the shepherds. The wise men enquired, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east and are come to worship Him". The angel declared, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). When Simeon saw Him, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God, saying, "For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" (Luke 2:30). Likewise Anna, a prophetess gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem (2:38). John said, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1: 18). The Lord said concerning Himself, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

Our Saviour is so vitally linked with God the Father that He could not act independently. Not that He did not have the power to do anything by Himself but He could do only the very things which the Father was doing. Though He was equal with the Father He would not claim independency. That is why the Lord Jesus Christ said, "The Son can do nothing of

Himself but what He seeth the Father do; for what things so ever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise" (John 5: 19). It is very clear from the Lord's saying that He has continual access to the Father and full knowledge of what is going on in heaven. The Son, who is equal with God the Father, is our Lord Jesus Christ. We read in verses 20 and 21, "For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth; and He will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will". How true it is that the Lord Jesus Christ is the darling of His father? He is "the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18). Therefore, the voice of God from heaven came, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Mathew 3: 17). The Lord Jesus, being the Son of God, had the power to give life. This proves the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout the Bible, we are instructed that God alone be worshipped. In the Ten Commandments, the people were forbidden to have any god but the one true God. Now we are told that all should honour the Son just as they honour the Father (John 5:23). Therefore, we can conclude that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God Himself. The uniqueness of the person of Lord Jesus Christ is in verses 26 and 27. "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also because He is the son of man". It cannot be said of any man that he has life in himself. It is true that life is given to each one of us. But in regard to God and His Son, they have had life in Them from all eternity. That life never had a beginning and it never had a source apart from Them.

In John 6:68,69, Simon Peter said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God". As the disciples moved with Him, the personal encounters made them to solemnly declare that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

The scripture says, "For there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 6:16,17). The Lord also told the Jews, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:34). The wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23) and no one can save sinners unless God sets them free. And the Lord said to the Jews who listened to Him, "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed and ye shall know the truth and the

truth shall make you free. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:31,36). The Lord Jesus Christ being the Son of God, equal with the Father, could make them free.

Peter, James and John were privileged to see Him transfigured. They never had an opportunity to see His glory veiled in a body of flesh. We read, "His face did shine as the sun and His raiment was white as the light" (Math 17:2). This was a visible manifestation of His deity. In verse 3 we read that Moses and Elijah appeared on the Mount and discussed His approaching death at Jerusalem (Luke 9:30,31). These disciples were overtaken with the splendour and they suggested erecting three memorial tabernacles. They failed to give pre-eminence; they could not equate the Lord Jesus Christ with Moses and Elijah. Then the Father covered them all with a brightly cloud, announcing, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him". God the Father glorified His Son as the supreme Monarch. Now look at the conclusion John made in his Gospel. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name" (John 20:30,31).

With the fall of the first man and the whole world being under sin, there was no alternative other than the Son of God being made a substitute. We read, "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" (Gal 4:4,5). The uniqueness of the Son of God is revealed in these verses. He is the eternal Son of God; yet He was born of a woman. It is marvellous to note here the deity and humanity of the Saviour. As Son of God, the Lord Jesus could never have been under the law. After all He was the One who gave it. William MacDonald puts it, "But in condescending grace, He put himself under the law that He had made in order that He might magnify it in His life and bear its curse in His death". Govett says, "Christ by nature Son of God became Son of man, that we by nature Sons of man, might become Sons of God. Wonderful exchange"!

What does Apostle Paul say of our Lord? "He is the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom 1 :3,4). He could take back His life. We read His own words, "Therefore doth My Father love me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again" (John 10:17,18).

The writer to the Hebrews says, "He (the Son) being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb 1 :3). The first few verses (Hebrew 1) bring out

(1) the Son is the Father's heir - that shows His power

(2) the Son is the Father's radiance - that shows His character

(3) the Son is Superior to the angels - that shows His Majesty and

(4) the Son is the only begotten one in whom all the fullness of the God-head dwelleth bodily - that shows His deity.

When we come to Chapter 2 we read, "We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour" (v 9). He is crowned because He tasted death for His fellows. In chapter 4 we read, "Jesus the Son of God who has passed into the heavens" (v 14). In chapter 7 we are told, "For such an high priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens" (v.26). In chapter 10 we read, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (v 19). In chapter 12 we read, "Looking unto Jesus, the Captain and perfecter of faith" (v 2).

This is our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son and His role being incomparable, we can testify, "He is the incomparable Son".



FOR PRAYER

The Trustees of SBC have prayerfully decided to construct two more floors on the existing dormitories, to facilitate the intake of more students. SBC has now upgraded the course to a three year B.Th, program and is expecting to have more inmates by the next academic year. The estimated cost of the project is around Rs. 20 lakhs (Rs. 2 Million or USD 50000) The valuable and prayerful support of the Lord's people is requested as this ministry is run on the free will offerings of the Lord's people.

THE PSALMS THEIR UNIVERSAL APPEAL (2)

James Varghese, *Brahmavar*

Meditating the Word of God

The very first Psalm tells of the blessedness of a man who delights in the Law of God and meditates in it day and night. Ps.19:7-11 shows how precious is the Law of God. Whole of the largest psalm, Ps.119 is about the Word of God. The preeminent characteristic of the Law is its moral instructions, leading one in the path of righteousness (Compare Ps. 119:137-138; 105 and 121). Psalm 119 shows that one who is so instructed by the Law will be undefiled (v.1), does no iniquity (v.3), cleanses his way (v.9), might not sin against God (11), does not incline to covetousness (v.36), restrains his feet from every evil way (v.101), hates every false way (v.128) and so on.

This superlative estimate of Law of God may appear to be at variance with the NT view of Law especially as Paul has expounded the subject. The difference is seeing the person of God above the letters of the Law. The Psalmist who praises the Law of God is first devoted to God and delights to have LORD for his portion (Ps.119:38, 57). And it is with this devotion to God he sought to know the requirements of His law. The godly man understands the mind of God from the essence of Law. He understands from the moral commandments of Law that God is holy and righteous and wants His people to be holy and righteous; he further understands that God is gracious to forgive them as such forgiveness of transgression is provided through levitical sacrifices ordained in the Law. One delights when he learns that both requirements of holy living and mercy to the erring one are manifestation of God's love to His people. It is because there are truths beyond the letters one must meditate the Law.

Seeking His Mercy and Forgiveness of Sins

: The Psalmist saw God not only as a God of holiness and righteousness to be feared, but also as One having mercy and lovingkindness to those who seek Him. Ps.145:8-9; 14-18. David the psalmist trusted God for forgiveness of his sins. In Ps.19: 12-14 he desires that sin should not have dominion over him and he should be cleansed from all forms of sins. And yet he recognizes that he cannot be free of sin and can trust only in the mercy and forgiveness of God and this he articulates in the celebrated Psalm 103, in verses 3-4 and 8-13. This truth of divine forgiveness is stated in a personal way in Ps. 32. It becomes a prayer in Ps. 130:1-4. His prayer becomes more personal in Ps. 25:4-11 and Ps.38 and still more personal and agonizing in Ps.51, a prayer dealing with a particular sin that morally shattered him.

Seeing LORD as the God of Israel: There are many narratives in the Psalms which are predominantly and sometimes exclusively about the Israelites. Most of the third Book of Psalms [that is from 73 to 89] have this

characteristic. Particularly note Psalms 72, 78, 80, 105,126, 136 and 137. Some of them recount the deliverance from Egypt, while others deal with present state of hostility and captivity. There are also many psalms dealing with personal experiences, frustrations, hopes and thanksgiving of David and other godly men of Israel. But they did not see either Israel's national life or the experiences of their personal lives entirely in isolation as a matter affecting only themselves. These are all parts of the larger picture. They saw all that was happening to them in a relation to their perception of the universal reign of a heavenly God (Ps. 57:5,11; 48:10). They lived in the midst and sight of a watching world. Whatever happened to them was news in the surrounding nations (Ps.126:2). They knew that by what God was doing in the life of His people, He was showing the world who He was and what He was like. What happened to Israel had a message to the whole world. By so manifesting Himself to the world, the purpose of God was not only to show the world that the God of Israel was mightier than the gods they served but, more than that, to provide opportunity to the nations of the world to know Him and to become His worshippers. Thus, by the judgment of their enemies they hoped, "it will be known to the ends of the earth that God rules over Jacob". Ps. 59: 13 (NIV). They prayed, "Let them know that you, whose name is the LORD - that you alone are the Most High over all the earth" 83:18 (NIV). About the deliverance of Israel, they say, "His righteousness He has openly shown in the sight of the nations; He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God"(Ps.98:2-3).

Trinity of Godhead and Prophecy of Messiah: Psalmists' understanding of Godhead was characterized by the doctrine of Trinity.

David knew God's Holy Spirit as dwelling in him (Ps.51:11) and leading him in uprightness (Ps.143:10). God's people may some times rebel against His Spirit (Ps.106:33) but they cannot flee from the Spirit (Ps. 139:7). There is One at the right hand of LORD whom God calls "My Son" (Pss. 2:7; 110:1). David says of Him as his Lord. This is our Lord Jesus Christ. Asaph sees Him as 'the Man of God's right hand' (Ps.80:17). Psalms have all the important facts of the life and mission of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ presented in poetical form. Psalms tell us about His eternal existence and work in creation of the universe (Ps.102:25-27), His coming down from heaven in incarnation (Ps.40: 6-8), of His teachings (Ps. 78:1-2), His sufferings on the Cross (Pss.69 and 22), that His body will not see corruption but will be resurrected and He will be ascended to the right hand of the Father (Pss. 16:10; 110:1), and that He is God and eternal king (Ps. 45:6-7).

(to be contd...)

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

INTERCESSION FOR ONESIMUS (8-21)

Cliff Jones, U.K

v.8 "Wherefore, though 1 might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,"

Knowing Philemon's love for the Lord Jesus Christ and for all believers, (v.5), and knowing that he had been a source of blessing to them in the past, Paul felt confident that he could write freely to Philemon, appealing to him to be kind and forgiving to Onesimus.

Paul could have commanded Philemon, with all the authority he had as an apostle, to forgive Onesimus. He had been given this authority by the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 1: 1; 1 Cor. 9: 1; Gal. 1: 1). He could have instructed Philemon to receive Onesimus back, and not punish him. However, Paul did not feel that he needed to use this authority when writing to Philemon.

v.9 "Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ."

Paul made intercession for Onesimus "for love's sake". Love is the best and most powerful motivating force and should be at the root of all a believer does. Paul was appealing as a man who was advancing in years and who had suffered physically and mentally in his service for his Lord and Master. Once again, he drew attention to the fact that he was a prisoner as a result of his dedication and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ.

v.10. "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom 1 have begotten in my bonds:"

Paul appealed and interceded on behalf of Onesimus. He regarded the Gentile slave as his own son, that is, his spiritual son whom he had begotten while he was a prisoner. Onesimus had come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the words "my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten", we can sense and feel the love that Paul had for Onesimus who was now walking "in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

v.11 "Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:"

We saw earlier that the name *Onesimus* could be translated as meaning *profitable* or *useful*, and in verse 11 we find a play on words. Paul wrote saying that in the past Onesimus had been "*unprofitable*", or "*useless*", to Philemon but, having been saved, he was a changed and different man. If the Onesimus who had run away had not worked well for his master in the past, then the slave who was returning was a believer and could be expected to

serve Philemon faithfully.

Believers are enjoined to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4: 1). Onesimus was evidently doing this and would now be "*profitable*", or "*useful*", not only to Philemon but to Paul also. Christian employees should be honest, trustworthy, reliable, faithful, conscientious and hardworking. We read "whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Col. 3:23).

v.12: "Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:"

Paul made a direct appeal to Philemon in this verse, asking him to receive Onesimus whom he was sending back, as he would have received Paul himself. He referred to Onesimus as "*mine own bowels*", that is, his very heart, a part of himself. So dear had Onesimus become to Paul.

v.13 "Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:" Onesimus, Paul's "faithful and beloved brother" (Col. 4:9), who was so very dear to him, had been a great help as he served with Paul in the Lord's work and was, no doubt, of assistance to the imprisoned apostle in many ways. Nonetheless, Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon. This was the right thing to do because Onesimus was Philemon's slave. Under Roman law, that meant that he was owned by Philemon, and Paul would not violate Philemon's legal rights by keeping his beloved Onesimus with him. Believers must fulfil all legal obligations and all duties which do not contradict the will of God. Onesimus had served with Paul in Rome just as Philemon would have done had he been there.

v.14 "But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly."

Much as Paul would have liked to have kept Onesimus with him, he would do nothing without the consent of Philemon. Paul wanted Philemon's kind and merciful reception of Onesimus to be of his own free will, motivated by love and not by any constraint, compulsion or authoritative pressure put on him by Paul. Philemon's behaviour and treatment of Onesimus was not to be "*of necessity, but willingly*". God loves those who give gladly, freely and cheerfully, (2 Cor. 9:7). Philemon had to decide, as before God, how he would receive and treat Onesimus. If he received him lovingly, graciously

and mercifully, as no doubt he did, Philemon would then have had another decision to make, and that was whether to keep Onesimus in Colosse or to send him back to help and benefit Paul in Rome. This decision would also have to be made freely, willingly and without compulsion or coercion by Paul.

v.15 *“For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;”*

The sovereignty, grace and love of God are seen in the life and experiences of Onesimus as, indeed, they are seen in the lives and experiences of all believers. Onesimus had stolen from Philemon and run away. But we have here yet another example and illustration of the truth of the words that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Rom. 5:20), for the “God of all grace” (1 Pet. 5: 10), so ordered events that Onesimus came into contact with Paul and was saved. Philemon had been separated from Onesimus and deprived of his services for a short time. All of this might have been allowed by God so that, ultimately, good would result. The returning slave now had a completely different relationship with his master. He was no longer merely Philemon’s slave but a fellow believer, a brother in the Lord, and this he would be eternally.

v.16 *“Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?”*

Paul wanted Philemon to receive Onesimus back, *“Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved”*. Onesimus was still Philemon’s slave and legally his property, a relationship which would one day come to an end. Having been saved, however, Onesimus had a new and eternal relationship with both Paul and Philemon. He returned, not merely as a slave, but as a *“brother beloved”*, dear to Paul and even more so to Philemon, both as a man, his converted, transformed, dependable slave, and as a brother in the Lord (1 Cor. 7:21-24; Gal. 3:26-28; Col. 3:11). How these truths would have affected Philemon’s attitude to the returning slave.

v.17 *“Thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.”*

Paul expressed his wishes and his intercession in a few poignant words. If Philemon regarded Paul as *“a partner”*, sharing and enjoying fellowship together, sharing in the faith, in the salvation all believers have by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and sharing in the work of the Lord, then he was to receive back the repentant Onesimus. He was to receive Onesimus, who was now a fellow believer, with the same love that he

would have felt and shown to Paul had he himself come to Philemon. There was to be complete and genuine forgiveness of the wrongs Onesimus had committed in stealing and running away from his master.

v.18 *“If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought,. . . put that on mine account;”*

Paul told Philemon to charge him with the value of whatever it was that Onesimus had stolen from Philemon. Paul’s preparedness to make himself responsible for paying the amount Onesimus had stolen showed the reality of his love for his “son Onesimus” (v. 10). As sinners we were hopeless and helpless. We could do nothing to save ourselves, but the Lord Jesus Christ paid the price of our redemption (1 Pet. 1:18,19). He suffered and died “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1 Pet. 3:18). He suffered and died as our Substitute. Those of us who are believers “were reconciled to God by the death of his Son” (Rom. 5:10). The Lord “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4:25), and now, being justified by our God-given faith in Him, we have peace with God (Rom. 5:1). Our sins were charged to the Lord Jesus, He bore them “in his own body on the tree” (1 Pet. 2:24). God “made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. 5:21). The Lord’s suffering and death on the Cross cancelled our debt to God, for our sins were imputed to Him and, by faith, His righteousness is imputed to believers. God receives us in the merits of His Son.

v.19 *“I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.”*

The promise to repay the amount due from Onesimus was written by Paul’s *“own hand”*. He tactfully reminds Philemon, who doubtless did not need reminding, that he owed Paul far more than the value of what Onesimus had stolen, for not only was Paul sending back to him a runaway slave, but Philemon himself had been saved through Paul’s ministry, probably at Ephesus. If the amount Onesimus owed was, as it were, debited to Paul’s account, then the credit on that account, showing what Philemon owed to Paul, would far exceed the debit.

v.20 *“Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.”*

Philemon was Paul’s brother in the Lord, and Onesimus was Paul’s brother (Col. 4:9), as well as Philemon’s brother (v. 16). They were “all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28), and Paul, the aged prisoner, asked his brother Philemon to give him joy and refresh his heart by responding to the

intercession he made on behalf of Onesimus by forgiving him and receiving him back with love and kindness. Philemon had given joy, refreshment and encouragement in so many ways to the saints at Colosse and now he was being asked to extend his loving-kindness to Paul, his spiritual father. Philemon was asked to do this "in the Lord", in loving fellowship with Him, showing love and grace in accordance with His will and by the enabling power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6: 19). God would be pleased and glorified by the love, grace and mercy shown by Philemon, and Paul would be cheered and encouraged.

v.21 "Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say." Such was Paul's knowledge and high opinion of Philemon that he was confident that Philemon would be more than obedient and would do even more for Onesimus than Paul had requested in his intercession for him. Paul was convinced that Philemon would be obedient to the will of God, showing love, mercy, grace and forgiveness to the returning Onesimus and receiving him back as a "brother beloved" (v.16). Paul was confident that Philemon would do as we

are told to do in Ephesians 4:32, and that is to be "kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you".

KIND ATTENTION!

The 17th All India Workers' Conference is planned to be held at the OM Centre in Secunderabad, A.P from 16th to 19th October 2008. We expect several international speakers including J.B.Nicholson (Jr). Please uphold this matter in your valuable prayers so that it will be a time of great blessing. This conference would need substantial resources also. More details will be given later.

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Vineyard News

ANDHRA PRADESH

01/03/08 **P.M.Jaison, Indira Jn.**
They conducted their annual convention from January 10-13th. Bros. P.M. Georgekutty and M. Hemantha Rao ministered the Word. Two brothers witnessed the Lord in the waters of baptism during this convention. 12 brothers dedicated themselves to do the Lord's work along with their Job. Continue to pray for these brethren.

02/03/08 **Ananda Jaya Babu, Vizianagaram**
The ministry is going on well here. Prayers are requested for the blessings of following ministries: for their assembly activities; for regular gospel outreach in different Mandals; for Emmaus literature work; for Gospel book room ministries and for the film ministries.

03/03/08 **D. John Moses, Kurnool**
They had their 14th Youth camp in the month of January in Kurnool. Prayers are requested for the blessings of all those who attended this meeting and also for their medical camp in Nallamalla hills among the tribal people.

BIHAR

04/03/08 **R.S. Paswan, Rusulour Shalim**
The ministry is going on well. The regular Bible studies and door-to-door evangelism work are being blessed by the Lord. Lord has given him a burden to concentrate in a new place called Sarabdipur, 30 km away from Muzaffarpur. He is prayerfully planning to shift to this place with his family. Pray that God may establish an Assembly testimony in this new place.

05/03/08 **Niranjan Kuam Paswan, Mohalla**
They had a special children's programme on 3rd January. Around 100 children and sixty parents attended this meeting. Many servants of God from different parts of Bihar shared God's Word. Pray that everyone who attended this meeting may be blessed.

CHATTISGARH

06/03/08 **Harbushan Ravna, Rajnandgaon**
The 68th Gospel Penetration Campaign was held in Somni, 15 kms away from Rajanandgaon on Durg highway. Many evangelists gathered here for the four-days' outreach programme. Prayers are solicited for the blessings of this campaign.

07/03/08 **Robinson Raot, Raigarh**
They are involved in door-to-door evangelism, open-air preaching and evening gospel meetings in various villages. For fifteen days the students from BBTI, Jamtara were with them. On 24th December-07 they had a special meeting for beggars and lepers, inviting them to hear gospel and for dinner. Prayers are solicited for the follow up works and for the special Bible study they are planning to have from May 1-10th.

08/03/08 **Benjamin Raot, Bilaspur**
In addition to the on going ministries in Bilaspur, they have started a new ministry in a village called Tharan. A few brothers and sisters from non-Christian background have accepted the Lord from this village. Brother and his family are planning to move to this new village for the furtherance of the gospel. Uphold this village and ministry in your valuable prayers.

09/03/08 **E.P. Jose, Bastar**
The believers of Sisrisguda Immanuel Brethren assembly are facing difficult times as Chattisgarh govt. has decided to evacuate 10 villages and hand over the land to TATA steel plant. There are around 200 believers living in this area. Villagers are asked to join in the protest. But the Assembly decided to have 3 days fasting and prayer. Earnest prayers requested

Elias O.S., Anpurnapara
God enabled them to complete and dedicate the new assembly hall for His glory in December-07. As a step to extend their ministry they are planning to start a boys' home to educate children from believing families of the villagers who do not have means to bring them up. Moreover they have decided to start a sewing class for the girls so

that they can earn their livelihood. Prayers are requested for God's blessings upon these ministries.

11/03/08

T. Souri Rajan, Raipur

God enabled them to work here in Raipur and surrounding villages for the last 20 years. Prayers are coveted for the blessings of the two assembly testimonies here and also for the need of a prayer hall.

JHARKHAND

12/03/08

David Joseph, Dhanbad

The Lord has raised up a local brother to continue the ministry here. Brother as a family is planning to move to Goa. Pray that God may use this local brother for the extension of His Kingdom here in Dhanbad and also for the provision of a proper house for Bro. David in Goa.

13/03/08

Francis Hansda, Budhudih

He had a wonderful time visiting the Malto tribes in the hilly area of Sahebganj District. Prayers are solicited for the blessing of this ministry as well as for the consolation of the bereaved family of Sister Nisa who was taken to glory.

KARNATAKA

14/03/08

V. Murthy, Mysore

The work here in Mysore South is going on well. They have regular Bible studies at Gogulam, Jayanagar, Visweswara Nagar and Kesere. Recently two sisters accepted the Lord and three brothers got baptized in the month of February. Continue to uphold these dear ones for their spiritual growth.

15/03/08

J. Samson, Chamarajanagar

Huralinanjanapura is a new village where they are constantly preaching the word of God. Eight people believed the Lord and were baptized from this village. They are prayerfully planning to begin a worship service in this place, for which they are in need of a proper place. Prayers are coveted.

16/03/08

Simon A., Ujjanipura

15-20 people gather for regular Bible studies in Hosabullpura near Bhadravathi. In addition to this he is involved with ministry in Ujjanipura. Prayers are requested for the ministry in these two places and for his family

17/03/08

R. Yesurathnam, Chalukyanagar

They have started a singing team named Gospel Trumpets for the extension of the Gospel. They are in need of some musical instruments, like key board, rhythm pad, etc. Pray for the blessings of this ministry.

KERALA

18/03/08

Arun K. Paul, Adimali

They had a gospel campaign from February 19th to 21st and they are prayerfully planning to conduct a Children's Bible school from April 1st-3rd and a six days Bible course from May 5th-10th. Earnest prayers are solicited for the blessings of these meetings.

19/03/08

K.V. Thomas, Kangazha

The gospel campaign work in Idukki and Alapuzha is going on well. As the result of their campaign in December-07 about 47 people accepted the Lord as their personal Saviour and Lord. Prayers are solicited for the constant blessings of this ministry.

20/03/08

Francis David, Trichur

Brother informs that he has shifted his place of work to Assam from last November. At present he is learning the language with brother Ravikumar at New Bongaigaon. He will be moving to a new place called Barpetta, as the Lord leads him. Prayers are requested.

ORISSA

21/03/08

Anusarana Pani, Ashpally

Here the assembly activities are carried on well. Earnest prayers are coveted for the following matters: Two sisters were expelled from their houses after they had trusted the Lord. They are in need of some help to complete their houses; for his wife who is suffering from Diabetes and other related problems; and for the need of an assembly hall as the present shed has been almost destroyed by the flood.

22/03/08

Solomon Pradan, Angul

Bro. Jones Cherian and team were with them from November 16th - 17th. During their visit five believers were baptized and all of them are from non-Christian background. Prayers are solicited for their spiritual growth.

23/03/08 **Sunny T. Daniel, Jeypore**
The grace of God keeps them well for the extension of the Gospel of Christ. Bros. Susanta and Sujith are involved in the ministry. Continue to uphold him in your prayers and also his wife Kunjunjamma who is suffering from back pain and knee pain.

WEST BENGAL

24/03/08 **Billy P. Jacob, Siliguri**
The newly constructed Bantikori assembly hall was dedicated to the service of the Lord on 20th January. Around sixty believers were baptized on 18th & 19th January and are attending the Bantikori assembly. Prayers are coveted for their spiritual growth.

25/03/08 **Achintya Gosh, Assansol**
The outreach they have conducted in the month of Decmber-07 was successful. There were nine evangelists working together in different parts of Asansol. Now the follow up work is going on. Prayers are requested for the blessings of their next outreach programme during this month (March) at Chinchurah, the H.Qrs. of Hoogly.

26/03/08 **Jayanta Das, Kolkatta**
They have started a new ministry in a place called Baranagar, distributing gospel literature and with door-to-door evangelism. Bro. Amit Adhikary, a full-time worker at the Airport Assembly, recently married to a believing girl, is doing the work in this place with his family. Prayers are coveted for the blessing of this new work.

27/03/08 **Samuel Das, Kantaranguni**
God continues to bless the ministry here with some new families, who are really interested to study the Word. From the month of February they have started a new work in Manbazar, where there is no church, though there are many Christians. Pray for the blessings and growth of this ministry.

HOME CALL

Hubert Thomas Kimber (92), Australia, a faithful servant of Christ who served his Master both in India and South Australia, was called home to be with his Lord and Saviour of 2nd December-2007. Being a missionary in India, centred at Pune, he had a real heart for the Lord's work in India. Prayers are solicited for the bereaved family.

OTHER MATTERS

28/03/08 **Paul G'kandan, Kariapatti**
By God's grace the assembly in Kariapatti was started in July 2002. Now around 25 believers are taking part in Lord's Table and six are ready to be baptized. So they are in need of a land and an assembly hall for the gathering of the believers. Please prayerfully support this ministry as most of them are from poor background.

29/03/08 **Sunil Kumar S. Bhore**, from *Shankeshwar* informs that he was commended to the Lord's work in March-07 by the Shankeswar Brethren Assembly. He is involved with ministries in various other places also. He requests prayers for evangelistic campaign that was held in the last week of Dec-07 and also for the veteran evangelist of this place. He was 88 years.

30/03/08 **Madhavaram Brethren Assembly** informs that on 21st March-08, they are planning to conduct an outreach work in nearby areas, with the help of the city assemblies in Chennai. Prayers are coveted for the blessings of this effort. (V. Philip).

31/03/08 **New Panvel, Mumbai** - By God's grace this assembly & its ministries are going on well. Kindly note the communication address for all matters related to this assembly. *Mr. James George, Christian Believers Assembly-Panvel Ground Floor-Grace Villa, Plot-18, Road-16, Sector-19, New Panvel (E)-410 206, Raighad Dt. Maharashtra. Email - panvelasbly@yahoo.co.i* ,

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KNOW YOUR FRIENDS AT SBC BISHI KESHAN NAIK

I was born in a small village in Orissa into a Hindu family. I was quite fervent in the religious matters, observing all the customs and rituals. Although I did all those things I did not know the true and living God.



It was then that brother Laxmi Raj met me and shared the Good news of salvation to me. I realized that Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation and without Him I am destined for hell. Then I confessed my sins to the Lord Jesus Christ and accepted Him as my Lord and Saviour. It was then that I got real peace and joy in my heart. After that I was in fellowship with the assembly in Kushkela, and got baptized on 24/04/2004. I had a desire to know more of this true and living God revealed in the Bible. So I applied to Stewards Bible College. By God's grace I am now studying in the first year. Kindly pray for me and my future life.

Note: Only Biblically sound articles are accepted for publication in "Vineyard Echoes". However, Vineyard Echoes does not necessarily endorse or hold responsibility for the views expressed by the authors in their articles and the material information furnished by the brethren for the Vineyard News column.

All Correspondence, Articles, Subscriptions or gifts for the Ministry may be sent to: The Gospel Fellowship Trust of India, No.1, Bethesda Centre, Kodungaiyur P.O, Chennai- 600 118, TN, INDIA.

Phone: +91-44- 2555 0598 / 2555 0295
Email: admin@gfti.org

PRAY FOR

The Gospel Fellowship Trust of India

(Regd. Society No.183/1968)

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(Legal Jurisdiction: Madras)

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1. To encourage the preaching of the Good News of Salvation throughout India and elsewhere.
2. To encourage the planting of New Testament-based Christian Assemblies.
3. To act as a channel to pass on to the Lord's Servants (enjoying current commendations of their home assemblies) the voluntary contributions of God's people. We now serve over 900 brethren.
4. Assistance to those in distress through natural calamities etc.,
5. To support those in extreme need such as widows, the poor and those parents in difficulty to educate their children.
6. Evangelism through Literature, Special Conferences.
7. To Support Assembly-based Bible Education.

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Phone: 044-2555 0598 / 2555 0295 / 9444366863
Email: admin@gfti.org

The last date for receiving filled in application forms will be 30th April-2008. The current session of SBC will come to a close on 29th March-08, with a simple farewell function. After the summer vacation we hope to reopen by 16th June-08.