

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

MAY 2008

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THE REDEEMER

God said to the children of Israel through Moses, "I am the Lord and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians and I will rid you out of their bondage and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm and with great judgments" (Ex 6:6). The themes of Exodus are redemption and the founding of the nation of Israel. The children of Israel who came to Egypt about 430 years ago multiplied and became a great company of people to reckon with. The Egyptians feared that in the event of a war, the children of Israel would change side. "Now there arose up a new King over Egypt which knew not Joseph". And he said unto his people, "Behold the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply and it come to pass that when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies and fight against us and so get them up out of the land" (Ex 1:8,10). *"And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage" (vs 13,14). We read, "And they cried and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning and God remembered His covenant with Abraham" (2:23,24). God reaffirmed, "And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage and I have remembered my covenant" (6:5). God came to their rescue as a Redeemer. No power on earth could have redeemed the children of Israel from bondage. God redeemed them with a powerful and outstretched arm. They saw with their own eyes the might of His deliverance.*

All the miracles that Moses performed at the command of God could not change the mind of Pharaoh. Some of the hard calamities did have an impact on Pharaoh, but he changed his mind the moment those plagues ceased to exist. The nine plagues could not move Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go. Redemption could be accomplished through death only. The angel of death passed through Egypt and all the firstborns were killed. Even the firstborns of people of Israel

would have met with death had they not taken shelter under the provision which God made. A lamb was provided so that its blood applied on "the two side posts and on the upper door post" would ward off the death imminent even on the firstborns of the children of Israel. "The lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it out from the sheep or the goats; and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they shall eat it. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (12:5-7, 13). Before the children of Israel were redeemed to be a nation, it was necessary that they were saved by the blood of the lamb chosen for that exclusive purpose. The moment they were saved, they were concurrently redeemed also. This lamb chosen for this specific purpose in the Old Testament both for the salvation and redemption of His chosen people, Israel, of course is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor. 5:7). William MacDonald writes, "It was to be without blemish speaking of the sinlessness of Christ; a male of the first year, perhaps suggesting our Lord's being cut off in the prime of life; kept until the fourteenth day of the month, pointing forward to the Savior's thirty years of private life in Nazareth, during which He was tested by God, then publicly for three years by the full scrutiny of man; killed by the congregation of Israel, as Christ was taken by wicked hands and slain (Acts 2:23); killed at twilight between the ninth and eleventh hours; as Jesus was killed at the ninth hour (Math 27:45-50). Its blood was to be applied to the door, bringing salvation from the destroyer (v 7); just as the blood of Christ, appropriated by faith, brings salvation from sin, self and Satan".

The deliverance of the children of Israel from death that devastated the Egyptians and their leading to the Promised Land through Red Sea and the wilderness to make them a "Nation" are pointers of the redemption accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ for the sinners of this world, both

Jews and Gentiles, who put their trust in Him. We read, "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb, without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1: 18).

In a rare outburst, Job said, "*For I know that my Redeemer liveth*" (Job 19:25). He knew that God would be his Redeemer and he would see Him in his flesh even though his skin was destroyed. Even though death and decay intervene, he is hopeful that his Redeemer will one day vindicate him and then restore him. We, who are redeemed by the Lord, could look at the same way. The Lord gave His own life so that He could be our Redeemer. Paul says, "He hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin" (Col.1: 13, 14). This is what we see exactly in the redemption of the children of Israel. After redemption, they were brought into Canaan, the Promised Land. Redemption describes the act whereby we are bought from the slave market of sin. He paid our price and that price was His own blood - the spotless and sinless blood of the Son of God. What a tremendous cost it is? Therefore, after we are redeemed, we cannot live our lives the way we choose; after all our lives belong to Him. He hath also ensured that we are translated to the Kingdom of His Son, as the children of Israel are given their promised land.

Let us look at some of the statements of God's people. David in Psalm 19:14 says, "*Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy Sight, O Lord, my strength (Rock) and my redeemer*". David slipped in his moral life and when on slippery ground, he was set on the Rock. When he was the eyesore of Saul and when he was running for his life from Absalom, God redeemed him to be the King of Israel. As our redeemer, God in Christ is the One who buys us back from sin, servitude and shame. David in another place said, "The Lord redeemed the soul of His servants and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate" (Ps 34:22). Praise God, there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus (Rom 8: 1).

Paul talks of justification through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. All the

redeemed are justified by God. The word "justify" means to reckon or declare to be righteous. The reason that God can declare sinners to be righteous is because the Lord Jesus Christ has fully paid the debt of their sins by His death and resurrection. In one way this is redemption - Redemption means buying back by payment of a ransom price. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians writes, "In whom we have the redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence" (Eph 1 :7,8). William MacDonald comments, "As we trace the sublime sweep of God's eternal plan for His people, we come next to the fact of redemption. This describes that aspect of the work of Christ by which we are freed from the bondage and guilt of sin and introduced into life of liberty. The Lord Jesus is the Redeemer (in Him we have redemption). We are the redeemed. His blood is the ransom price; nothing less would".

Thus, our Redeemer is at the right hand of His Father. He is our blessed Redeemer. There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, things in earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Let us join the hymn writer,

My redeemer, O', what beauties in that lovely name appear !

Ve

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 EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

Clif Jones, U.K

PROPOSED VISIT, GREETINGS AND SALUTATION (verses 22-25)

v.22 “But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.”

Paul hoped and expected that, as a result of the prayers of the Colossian believers, he would soon be released from his imprisonment in Rome and be allowed to go to Colosse and spend time with the believers there. His visit would bring joy and blessing to the Colossian believers. By asking Philemon to prepare a guest room for him, he brought before Philemon’s mind the possibility that he would soon see Paul face to face. This possibility must have made Philemon think, yet again, about the way in which he would receive and treat Onesimus, for Paul might soon be present and able to see, for himself, how Philemon had responded to the intercession Paul had made for his beloved Onesimus.

The Lord Jesus Christ will one day return for believers (1 Thess. 4: 16, 17). We shall then see Him face to face, “we shall see Him as He is” (1 Jn. 3:2). In the meantime, living in anticipation of His coming and in anticipation of seeing Him, we should be seeking to obey and serve Him, motivated by love for Him.

The vital importance of prayer is evident as one reads Paul’s epistles. Paul wrote “Brethren, pray for us” (1 Thess. 5 :25), “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5: 17), and “I will therefore that men pray every where” (1 Tim. 2:8). Prayer honours God, showing a believer’s awareness of the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of God and his total dependence on God for all things. In prayer, a believer can praise and give thanks to God and make his requests to God. Paul was a man of prayer (v.4; Rom. 1:9; 1 Cor. 1:4; Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:4; Col. 1:3,9; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:3.) Paul prayed for others and placed great value on the prayers of believers for himself and for all those who served God. He believed in the power of the prayers made on his behalf by the Colossian believers. We should always pray not only for ourselves but also for blessing on others and for their needs.

Paul spoke to the Lord when he was on the way to Damascus and said “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6). From that time, Paul surrendered his life to God. He was submissive and obedient to the revealed will of God for his life, praying for guidance and direction for all his activities. Paul knew that God is sovereign and can

control all things and all events. Paul knew that God can and does answer prayer, and so he said “*I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you*”.

v.23, “There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus;”

Epaphras. Epaphras was a Gentile from Colosse (Col. 4:12). He had been saved, probably during Paul’s three year ministry at Ephesus (Acts 20:31). He preached the Gospel in Colosse, people were saved and an assembly established. Many believers find that the most difficult places to witness to unbelievers are those places where they are well known and where they were known before they were saved. In such places the believer’s way of living will come under careful scrutiny. Epaphras witnessed and served the Lord well at Colosse, his home area, and he also served at Laodicea and Hierapolis (Col. 4:12,13). Epaphras was a man who served the Lord faithfully (Col. 1:7,8). He loved the believers and strove to ensure that they might be firmly and soundly established in the true faith (Col. 4:12).

When the assembly at Colosse was threatened by false teaching, Epaphras went to consult the imprisoned Paul in Rome. Paul had not been to Colosse (Col. 1:4,7), and Epaphras told him of the spiritual growth and condition of the Colossian believers (Col. 1 :6,8). Paul then, led by the Holy Spirit, wrote the Epistle to the Colossians which contains such valuable teaching and guidance for all believers.

Epaphras served the Lord and he was a fellow-servant of Paul and Timothy (Co I. 1:1,7). He was Paul’s “*fellowprisoner*”, and endured hardship in the Lord’s service. Epaphras was, like Paul, a man of prayer. He prayed consistently, constantly and fervently for the blessing and protection of the Colossian believers (Col. 4:12). We are told to “pray one for another” (Jas. 5:16), and Paul prayed for the Colossian believers although he had not met them (Co I. 1:3,9; 2:1).

v.24, “Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-labourers.”

The four men mentioned in this verse were also mentioned, together with Epaphras, in the Epistle to the Colossians (Co I. 4:10,14).

Marcus. This is John Mark who wrote the Second Gospel. He was one of Paul’s “*fellowlabourers*”. He is also mentioned in 1 Peter 5:13. Mark was a cousin of Barnabas (Acts 12:12,25; Col. 4:10). Barnabas “was a good man, and full of

the Holy Ghost and of faith” (Acts 11:24). He was generous, gentle and served the Lord fervently (Acts 4:37; 9:26,27; 11:22-26; 13:1-4).

Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on Paul’s first missionary journey but left them when they came to Perga and went back to Jerusalem (Acts 13:5,13). Barnabas wanted to take Mark on Paul’s second missionary journey but Paul refused because Mark had deserted them on the first journey. Disagreement arose between Paul and Barnabas, and Barnabas and Mark went to Cyprus and Paul and Silas went through Syria and Cilicia strengthening the churches (Acts 15:36-41). However, it is good to learn that, later, Paul showed his confidence in Mark by recommending him to the Colossi- an believers and asking them to receive him and welcome him if he came to them (Col. 4:10). Paul wrote to Timothy saying “Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry” (2 Tim. 4:11). The differences between them had been overcome.

Aristarchus. This man was from Thessalonica. He was another of Paul’s “*fellowlabourers*”, and is referred to in Colossians 4:10 as his “*fellowprisoner*”. He was with Paul in some very dangerous situations. He was with him at Ephesus, on Paul’s third missionary journey, when a riot took place (Acts 19:28-41), and he was with Paul when he was shipwrecked on Malta (Acts 27:2; 27:41-28:1).

Demas. Demas is mentioned as another of Paul’s “*fellowlabourers*”. He was mentioned in Colossians 4:14. Despite all the time he spent with Paul and other godly men, seeing the way they lived, and hearing them pray and preach, and despite having the privilege of learning so much from them, Demas ultimately deserted Paul. The last we hear of Demas is when Paul wrote “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica” (2 Tim. 4: 10).

Love of the world and the friendship of the world can play havoc with a believer’s spiritual life and testimony (1 Jn. 2:15,16; Jas. 4:4). We must all be careful to lead lives which are separated from the world and to God, for His glory and our eternal blessing (Ps. 1: 1; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1), and we must all remember the admonition “let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10: 12).

Lucas. Luke, “the beloved physician” (Co I. 4:14), who wrote the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, served the Lord faithfully. He spent a great deal of time with Paul and, being a medical doctor, he must, on many occasions, have been able to be of practical help to the apostle who experienced so much physical hardship in his dedicated service for the Lord.

Luke was one of Paul’s “*fellowlabourers*” and was

loyal, constant and reliable. During his second and last imprisonment in Rome, Paul wrote to Timothy saying “Only Luke is with me” (2 Tim. 4:11).

v.25, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.”

It was Paul’s normal practice to mention “*grace*” at the- beginnings and endings of his epistles, and the epistle to Philemon is no exception (v.3). Philemon would need grace to respond in love and mercy to Paul’s intercession on behalf of Onesimus. The word “*your*” in this verse is plural, and Paul wanted the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be experienced by Philemon and the entire Colossian assembly (v.2). He wanted the Lord’s grace, that is, His unmerited, unsought love and favour which he bestows freely upon guilty sinners who deserve nothing but wrath, judgement and eternal punishment, to be with, and experienced by, the Colossian believers. The grace of God, who is “the God of all grace” (1 Pet. 5:10), is revealed in and through His only begotten, eternal and beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord is full of grace and truth (Jn. 1:14,17), and believers are saved by grace, through God-given faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:5,8,9). Believers are “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24). In eternity, believers and other created beings will learn more and more of the beauties, greatness and riches of God’s grace which will be revealed in the kindness He has bestowed, and will bestow, upon us “through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7).

We owe all our blessings, both in this life and in eternity, to the grace of God (Rom. 5:15), and to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9).

Paul wanted the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be “*with your spirit*”. Man is a tripartite being, having spirit, soul and body (1 Thess. 5:23). The spirit of a man makes him Godconscious and allows him to have communion with God. The soul makes a man selfconscious and is the seat of the desires, emotions and affections (Jn. 12:27). Spirit and soul are divisible (Heb. 4:12). The body can be separated from the spirit and the soul, and it can die (2 Cor. 5: 1). It is through the body that a man has awareness of the world around.

As a result of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ being with their spirits, Philemon and the believers at Colosse would be enabled to receive Onesimus with love, grace, mercy and joy.



THE KINGS OF JUDAH (9)

UZZIAH

Koshy Zachariah

Strength of Jehovah

2 Kings 15:1-7; 2 Chr 26

Contemporary Prophets – Zechariah of 2 Chr 26:5, Isaiah, Hosea and Amos

Uzziah, meaning strength of Jehovah, became King over Judah after his father Amaziah was assassinated for turning away from following the Lord. He was sixteen years old when he took over the reign. Unlike his predecessors, he came to the throne by the direct choice of the people, instead of ordinary succession. We read in 2 Chr 24:23 that the Princes were destroyed by the Syrians by the close of his grandfather Joash's reign, giving the people a free hand. In a way this weeding out was probably good. Many Princes ruling the land would amount to plundering the land and seeking their own things. In the process they would turn out to be incapable of judging aright. The suffering people naturally could turn to someone who would give them right ruling and sympathetic understanding. Their choice here of Uzziah (Azariah) was a good one. He is also named Azariah in 2 King 15:1. His mother's name was Jeholiah. She would have had pious expectations of her son, by the help of God. He ruled the Kingdom for fifty five years and is the longest continuous reign of any of the Kings of Judah. Though Manasseh also ruled fifty five years, the reign was interrupted by his deposition and captivity by the King of Babylon.

There was great industrial prosperity during his reign. The first one recorded is the building of Eloth. Eloth was a seaport on the Red Sea near Ezion-geber (1 Kings 9:26). "And King Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-giber which is beside Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom". This was lost to Judah during the reign of Joram (2 Kings 8:20) and Edomites made a King for themselves. Now Uzziah annexed Edom and

restored to the crown of Judah. With an uncanny ability for the industrial progress of the nation, Uzziah felt the importance of Eloth forming part of Judah.

We read of him, "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah who had understanding in the visions of God's and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper" (2 Chr 26:4-5). Like Jehoiada to Joash, Zechariah, though probably not a Prophet, had been able to give spiritual wisdom to Uzziah.

"And he went forth and warred against the Philistines and broke down the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod and built cities about Ashdod and among the Philistines. And God helped him against the Philistines and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal and the Mehunims" (2 Chr 26:6-7). In 2 Chr 21:16-17, we see that the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and of the Arabians that were near the Ethiopians. They carried away all the substances that were found in the King's house and his sons also and his wives. They killed all the sons except the youngest one Jehoash. Though God used them to teach Jehoram a lesson, but the killing of the sons remained a cruel act. And Uzziah wanted to punish the Philistines and God also helped him in this regard. Thus he avenged the Philistine invasion. "And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name was spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly" (2 Chr 26:8). Like in the days of Jehoshaphat, "And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries".

The reformation brought in the land could be read from the following. "Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate

and at the valley gate and at the turning of the wall and fortified them. Also he built towers in the desert and dug many wells: for he had many cattle both in the low country and in the plains; husbandmen also and vine-dressers in the mountains and in Carmel; for he loved husbandry. Moreover, Uzziah had a host of fighting men that went out to war by bands according to the number of their account by the hand of Jeiel, the scribe and Maaseiah the ruler under the hand of Hananiah, one of the King's Captains. The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were two thousand and six hundred. And under their hand was an army three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred that made war with mighty power to help the King against the enemy. And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields and spears and helmets and habergeons and bows and slings to cast stones. And he made in Jerusalem engines invented by cunning men to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread abroad for he was marvellously helped till he was strong" (2 Chr 27:9-15).

As is normally the way of the world, Uzziah's heart was lifted up with pride. "And pride goes before a fall". He felt himself upright and right with God so he could usurp the role of a Priest. He went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon altar of incense. And Azariah the Priest went in after him and with him eighty Priests of the Lord that were valiant men. They withstood him and prevented him. Uzziah was wroth and the leprosy rose up on his forehead before the Priests. And the Priests thrust him out and he remained a leper throughout his life. "He dwelt in several houses being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord" (2 Chr 26:21). Death was the actual penalty for his crime but God spared him. But they would not lay his leprous body in the city of David. Instead they buried him in the field of the burial which belonged to the Kings; for they said, "He is a leper". He began well but he could not keep to it. May God help us to see that we live a victorious Christian life with no downfalls at the fag end of our life.



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AND OTHER PARTICULARS ABOUT THE NEWSPAPER**

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I, Shaji Philip, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Chennai
25/03/08

Sd/
Shaji Philip
Publisher

Vineyard News

ANDAMANS

01/05/08

G. Selvakumar, Great Nicobar

All the assembly activities are going on well. After the Tsunami, the frequency of earthquakes is posing a threat to the newly built assembly hall; although it is on an elevated place, experts feel that unless a retaining wall is built the structure may collapse. The prices of building materials are so high that it is impossible to imagine to construct a wall, which alone will cost Rs.300,000. Prayers are coveted.

ANDHRA PRADESH

02/05/08

Narayan Paul, Kottur

Brother Subbayya is also with him these days, helping in the ministry, especially in the surrounding villages. Bro. M.G. John and Reji Jacob from Chennai were here for their annual convention from 29th Feb to 2nd March. It was a blessing. Our brother was not well recently and being in critical condition was admitted to a hospital in Vizag. Now he is better and improving. Prayers are requested for his good health.

03/05/08

Suvarna Raju, Gudur

Three days of special meetings were held from 7th to 9th March-08. On 7th the new assembly hall was dedicated. In the special meetings, brother M.A Jos from Trichur, Charley John, Agra, E. Joseph and bro. G.Raja Rao from Guntur were the speakers. God blessed the ministry of the Word. Brother Charley also spoke at Krishnapatnam for two days. Prayers are sought.

BIHAR

04/05/08

Yunus K. Mandal, Jamalpur

From 18th to 23rd March-08, they were able to conduct "Love Jamalpur" Gospel outreach programme, along with a team of ten brethren. Two families were contacted and they are now attending the meetings. Two other young people accepted Jesus Christ. A Gospel campaign was also held at Tharee village. Prayers are requested for the seed sown.

CHHATTISGARH

05/05/08

K.V. Thankachan, Durg

The Lord is wonderfully using him for His glory. They got

a special permission to preach in the Durg Central jail on 23/03/08, on Easter Sunday. Around 800 prisoners are housed here. Pray that the seed sown may work in their hearts. They are planning to start the construction of a new assembly hall at Durg. Prayers are solicited.

06/05/08

Babu Thomas, Bastar

They were finally able to settle and publish an alphabet for the Halbi language. The education dept has asked their help to make text books to teach in schools. The assembly witness and the Child Care Centre are going on well by His grace. Prayers are requested.

07/05/08

N.S Borde, Borsi

Brother has not been quite well for some time now, due to problems related to kidney and heart as he has a long history of Diabetes; however, he is much better now by the grace of God and prayers of God's people. They are praying that God would send a committed couple to assist them in the great work in this area.

GUJARAT

08/05/08

David P Isaac, Rajkot

The Lord's work is progressing here. He requests prayer for his wife Susamma who is suffering from spinal pain. She is under treatment in the Walkhorit hospital here. A brother was baptized on 20th March-08; prayers are requested for his spiritual growth.

09/05/08

Jose Dali, Vapi

The Lord has added a few new souls to the Assembly recently. On 2nd March five believers from Zerry village witnessed the Lord in water baptism. The literacy classes are going on with encouraging results, being attended by around 26 children. Both he and his wife have their own share of physical ailments; however, the Lord is sustaining them. Prayers are coveted.

10/05/08

N.G. John, Baroda

They could visit many new places along with evangelists from the neighbouring assemblies, preaching the gospel and distributing tracts. Wherever there is an opening for the gospel, the follow up work is being carried out. In the summer vocation some collective training programmes are planned for the new believers.

JHARKHAND

11/05/08

Shailendra Murmu, Sahibganj

In the special meetings held from 29th Feb to 2nd March, there were speakers from Kerala and other places including bro. P.M.Skariah. More than 150 people

gathered to hear the Word. 24 believers who obeyed the Lord in water baptism from Simalkhundi village were added to the assembly fellowship on 2nd March. Prayers are requested for these new believers and also for all the needs of the ministry here.

KARNATAKA

12/05/08 **S.N. Daniel, Mysore**

The Lord is using our brother in various ways. In November last year, he had the opportunity to minister the Word at the seekers' conference of the Emmaus Bible Correspondence course at Chamaraj Nagar. The brethren from Bethany Assembly, Bangalore come frequently to help in the ministry here; that is a great encouragement. Prayers are solicited.

13/05/08 **B. Ashokan, Bangalore**

Since our brother has shifted his residence recently, kindly note his new address: *Dr. B. Ashokan, 77-159/4, Athma Vidhya Nagar, Byrathi, Dodda Gubbi P.O, Bangalore-562149.*

14/05/08 **Philemon Babu, Chitradurga**

Brother informs about the assembly gathering at Devanagare, which was gathering in a rented house, for the past six years. On 9/3/08 about 10 people forcibly entered the house, using abusive words and they beat up two brothers. They threw the Bibles and literature and threatened to burn them, if they gathered again. Prayers are requested that the Lord may give them own place to gather for worship.

15/05/08 **Venkatesh Murthy, Mysore**

On 16th Feb-08, a baptism service was held in which four believers obeyed the Lord in water. Please pray for their spiritual growth. They were able to make many new contacts recently; they are being followed up. Prayers are requested.

KERALA

16/05/08 **M.A Jos, Thrissur**

The anniversary of the children's club was held with 73 children on 8th February. In his own house there are about 30 children gathering. Their assembly convention took place with much blessing from 16th to 23rd March-08. Kindly note a small change in his residence address: *MA Jos, Malyakal, Swathanthra Nagar, (Valarkavu), Kuriachira P.O Thrissur-680 006. Kerala.*

17/05/08 **Arun K. Paul, Mankulam**

Brother informs that the Mankulam assembly is planning to conduct a Bible study week from 5th to 10th May-08. Brother K.C.Johnson, P.V.Benjamin and Kunjumon Daniel will be the teachers. A children's vacation club was organized from 7th to 9th April. Prayers are solicited.

MADHYA PRADESH

18/05/08 **Benny Charalil, Sehore**

They are prayerfully planning for a three months training programme for the new believers in Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh. They are expecting about 10 members for the same programme. Please uphold this effort and also all the regular activities of the assembly here.

ORISSA

19/05/08 **R. Sreedhar, Deira**

Ministry is going on in five places around here among Tamil and Telugu and Oriya people. God added many souls to the assembly recently. Please pray for their spiritual growth. They are also planning to conduct a seekers' conference. Prayers are needed.

20/05/08 **K.C. Thomas, Lamtaput**

The three month outreach from Jan-March went on well. They could cover about 300 villages. Thousands heard the Gospel; but a very few accepted. Six children are being looked after in the Home. From 2nd to 6th April, gospel meetings were held in four interior places. The Bible training in Oriya is planned from 16th June to December-08. Prayers are requested.

21/05/08 **Debendra Harpal, Nuapada**

By the grace of God the ministry is going on well. Personal contacts and special meetings are in progress. Since last month a few new people are attending the assembly. Gradually believers in the assembly are growing in numbers and spirit. The assembly hall construction at Khariar Road town is still incomplete due to shortage of funds. Prayers are solicited.

PUNJAB

22/05/08 **Larsen Lazar, Nangal Township**

The work in Nangal area is going on well. A youth meeting is going on every Thursday, which is being attended by about eight young people. The Sunday school is also being attended by around 13 children. As an assembly they plan to start a youth summer camp to reach out to many surrounding villages. For this they would require Bibles, tracts, booklets etc. Prayers are requested.

TAMIL NADU

23/05/08 **Madasamy S, Manaparai**

As they were returning from Madurai having attended three days meetings, on 9th Feb-08, the Omni van in which they were traveling met with an accident and our brother was injured on the head, and the right thigh bone was fractured. He was moved to a hospital in Trichy and was under the care of Dr.Jospeh C.Madhuram. A steel plate

is placed inside the thigh. He is under medication and rest. Prayers are requested

24/05/08

N.R. Nagendran, Manamadurai

On behalf of the Christian Brethren Assembly here, brother informs that the assembly testimony here was started on 29th September, 1996 with just 8 people. Now there are more than 55. Now they have prayerfully bought a piece of land for the assembly hall measuring four cents. About Rs. six lakhs is required to make a hall of 22X40 sq.ft. Prayers are coveted

25/05/08

Belthasar A., Nilakottai

By the grace of God the assembly work is going on well. Brother is working in this area for the past 25 years. As a result of his efforts, an assembly testimony was established here and in a few neighbouring places. By the efforts of his wife, a children home is being run with 25 children. Our brother's younger daughter took ill while studying nursing; it was considered serious. But by God's grace she was cured and she finished her course. God willing her marriage will take place on 30th May-08.

UTTARANCHAL

26/05/08

Beharilal B, Dehradun

Brother recently met with a bike accident; the Lord saved him from danger and he escaped with some minor injuries. Still under treatment and recovering. His son's marriage was held on 3rd April-08 in New Delhi. Prayers are requested for the newly married couple that the Lord would bless their family life..

UTTAR PRADESH

27/05/08

K.P Abraham, Lalitpur

The assembly, ministry and family are well, says our brother. This year the Lord blessed them with twelve new seekers from a nearby village; they are regularly attending the Bible study and worship. The assembly hall construction has reached the plinth level and is stopped due to shortage of funds. Another four lakhs rupees is required for completion. Prayers are solicited.

WEST BENGAL

28/05/08

Billy P. Jacob, Siliguri

The baptism service in which 57 believers obeyed the Lord took place on 30th Jan-08. After the baptism the new assembly hall was inaugurated by bro. George P. Jacob from Mumbai. The hall was sponsored by a brother from Ajman assembly. The message was delivered by Bro. Steve Rusk. Thus the first worship at Bhatikori was held on 3rd Feb-08. The next baptism and hall construction is planned in a village called Gugujorah. Prayers are requested for all the ministries going on in these areas.

OTHER MATTERS

29/05/08, **Christian Believers Assembly-Panvel**, Maharashtra, informs that they are in need of about another 11 lakhs rupees to buy a flat for their assembly gatherings. Your supports in this regard may be made in the name of Christian Believers Assembly-Panvel, SB A/c. No. 14750100012297, The federal bank, Panvel, and mailed to Mr. James George, Plot No.18,Rd-16, Sector-19, New Panvel (E)-410 206, Navi Mumbai.

30/05/08, **Madhavaram Brethren Assembly** in Chennai informs that with the help of the city assemblies an outreach was held on 21/03/08 (Good Friday), in the surrounding areas. From 20 local assemblies around 200 believers participated for this half-day programme. Prayers are coveted for the seed sown.

31/05/08, **K.Gopalakrishnan from Bokaro Steel city** informs about the Gospel Convention and Music nights held from 25th to 27th April-08. Bro. Sam Skaria, Johns Cherian, Lijo John and himself shared the Word. Prayers are requested.

Rehoboth Theological Institute, Trichur, Kerala, invites applications from born again men and women with a +2 pass, who have a desire to know and serve God and to be trained in God's Word, for their B.Th, course of three years duration in English medium. For prospectus and application form send Rs. 50/ to: *The Registrar, Rehoboth Theological Inst, Nelliunnu, Thirsur, Kerala-680 005.*

Book Review

Moriah Ministries, Chennai has recently published a book entitled "**The Vessels of honour**", containing articles written by Mr. Alf Chote New Zealand. These are articles which appeared from time to time in this magazine. It is a book that every Christian should read so that he or she could become honourable vessel used by the Lord. The book is priced at Rs.45/-, postage paid in India; and USD\$5/- for overseas. It is available from Moriah Ministries, Post Box-2540, No,1, West Club Road, Shenoy Nagar, Chennai-600 030, INDIA. Phone: 91-44-26224010. Email: moriahministries@gmail.com

KNOW YOUR FRIENDS AT SBC PHILIP LALDITTHLANG

I come from Churachandpur in Manipur. I was born and brought up in a good Christian family. However, I did not know Jesus as Lord and Saviour until 2001. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour during a youth camp. My father died while I was young and later my mother also left me; I am adopted into a home that loves me like their own son. Nevertheless the love of Christ was more than my parents, which compelled me to serve the Lord. So having received His call, I dedicated my life to Jesus on 7th April-2006. Since then I was involved with various ministries along with brother Hmar and Mr. Jeffry who did encourage me much in the Lord's work. My desire to learn more of the Bible brought me to SBC. I have finished my first year of training and am hoping to study in the second year from June-08. 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 and contributions 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.in

PRAY FOR

The Gospel Fellowship Trust of India

(Regd. Society No.183/1968)

No.1, Bethesda Centre, Kodungaiyur P.O, Chennai-600 118. India.

(Legal Jurisdiction: Madras)

Objectives of the ministry of GFTI

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.

APPLICATIONS INVITED:

Stewards Bible College, Chennai, (formerly ABTI) is a unique institution of its kind in teaching the Word of God systematically. Anyone who is born again, baptized and in fellowship with a local assembly, committed to the Lord's work and desiring a serious study, and deeper understanding of the Bible could apply. The medium of instruction being English, the candidates should have a working knowledge of English preferably +2 or its equivalent. Applications are invited for its next course which will start in the first week of June-2008.

SBC offers a three year programme leading to Bachelor of Theology (B.Th). We cover almost all aspects of the Bible including various disciplines in systematic theology and related subjects. Write immediately for prospectus and application form to:

Stewards Bible College,
1, Bethesda Centre, R.V Nagar,
Kodungaiyur P.O, Chennai-600 118, Tamil Nadu.
Phone: 044-2555 0598 / 2555 0295
Email: admin@gfti.org.in

The current session of SBC came to a close on 29th March-08, with a simple farewell function. After the summer vacation the college will reopen on 16th June-08.