

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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A fervent prayer to be effective needs an intimacy with the heavenly father. That is what we see in all the prayers of the Lord's people. A good example of this is the fervent prayer of Hannah as recorded in 1 Sam Chapter 1. As she prayed to God, she shut out the world and opened her heart. Her lips only moved, when the desire of her heart was presented to God. Believing in the greatness of God, she committed her barrenness to Him and with a sorrowful heart sought release from that barrenness – an impeccable faith in the God, who could make things possible against all impossibilities? And Eli the high priest, ultimately when he realized the anguish and intense prayer of Hannah, sent her away in peace with the prayer. “The God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him” (1 Sam 1:17). We see the answer to this prayer – a great prophet, Samuel, who anointed the first and second King of Israel. The deep respect in which this man of God was held is indicated by the grief that swept across the nation when he died (1 Sam 25:1).

In James 5:17,18, we read of Elijah as a man, earnest and fervent in prayer. It is recorded, “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again and the heaven gave rain and the earth brought forth her fruit”. Someone has paraphrased it; “The prayer of a man whose heart is right with God, works wonders”. It was not that Elijah belonged to a higher creation than ourselves; He was like any one of us, subject to the same weakness as any of us. Elijah is introduced to us in 1 King Chapter 17. He was a great prophet and his prayers could bring down blessings (rain) or wrath (drought and fire). He was the greatest of all prophets and in a way he was steps above them when it came to his absolute faith in the God of his fathers. He did no miracle for his own glory but all miracles were for the glory of God. He knew, being so intimate with God, that

whatever he asked of God, would be granted. He was a fearless prophet and he would say exactly the same thing what God told him. Elijah is mentioned in the Gospels in relation to the ministry of John the Baptist. John was in the spirit and power of Elias (Luke 1:17). Elijah's history is mentioned only in King. Nothing much is known of his background; neither the family nor the call to the prophetic ministry. He came from Tishbe in Gilead, east of the Jordan River and hence named a Tishbite.

All what we read about Elijah from 1 King 17 to 2 King 2:11 show that he was a man of prayer. He got clear guidance from his prayer line communication – therefore he did the miracles with certainty. As he was greatly troubled with the situation in Israel, he fervently prayed for their turning back to God. All around the country, there was idolatry and worshipping of Baal, forgetting the Mighty God who brought them from Egyptian slavery to a land, Canaan, flowing with milk and honey. Ahab, the King himself, was the kingpin in this sad state of affairs. He married a wicked idolatrous woman called Jezebel. “And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that was before him. And it came to pass as it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, King of the Zidonians and went and served Baal and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord, God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him” (1 Kg 16:30-33). The villainous woman, Jezebel succeeded in influencing Ahab to promote Baal worship. There was godlessness throughout the land. The people conveniently accepted this turn of events and there were only a very few who were jealous for the God of Israel, like Obadiah the steward in Ahab's palace who protected in secret a hundred prophets of God of Israel. We read, “Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly; for it was so

when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifty in a cave and fed them with bread and water” (1 King 18:3,4).

As Elijah was making intercession with God for his people and the land of Israel to release them from their sinful condition, their wickedness and the prominence of strange gods like Baal, the word of God came to him to tell Ahab of the drought that would be brought into the land. God wanted them to repent and turn to Him. We read, “Elijah said unto Ahab, “As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word” (1 King 17:1). Elijah pleaded for his people in prayer and God was gracious enough to give them a time of 3-1/2 years to repent and revert. Neither the King heeded to nor the people did earnestly look to God.

As Elijah prayed for a change in the heart of Israel during the period of drought, God told him to go to the Brook Cherith, east of Jordan. God now wanted to reassure Elijah how He was a God who could make the impossible possible. These experiences and assurances were necessary to make him to do the impossible before the prophets of Baal and Ahab, 3-1/2 years later. Surely 3-1/2 years unbroken prayer line made Elijah to stand with confidence in the name of his God, before his enemies, the false prophets of Baal to accomplish the great miracle, which none other prophets would have dared to do. Look at the experience by the side of Brook Cherith. The ravens regularly brought food for him. The ravens are greedy and cunning birds who will not spare any food that comes to their sight. Several ravens were appointed to provide food to Elijah.

Someone prepared the food and the ravens according to their course, one by one brought that food morning and evening without fail. Who could accomplish like this except God? Elijah prayed for his daily provisions and God answered that. As the Brook was drying, Elijah looked to the Lord in prayer asking for the next step. He appointed a Gentile widow to look after him. There was only “a handful of meal in a barrel and little oil in a cruse”, sufficient not even for a meal. But that barrel of meal did not

exhaust nor the cruse of oil fail so that the widow, her son and the prophet Elijah could be sustained, till the Lord sent rain upon the earth. Elijah was given an opportunity to be greatly strengthened when God granted his wish to bring back to life, the widow’s son who had died. “And Elijah stretched himself upon the child three times and cried unto the Lord and said, O, Lord my God, I pray Thee, let this child’s soul come into him again” (1 King 17:21). Truly Elijah was man of prayers – prayers that brought answers immediately.

The 3-1/2 years of prayer by this great servant and prophet Elijah to restore the faith of the children of Israel in the God of their fathers, accomplished the great miracle of fire coming down from heaven to consume the “burnt sacrifice, the wood and the stones and the dust and the water that was in the trench” (1 King 18:38). What was Elijah’s prayer? Hear me, O, Lord, hear me that this people may know that thou art the Lord God and that thou hast turned their heart back again” (v 37). The answer to his fervent prayer was very quick. And the prayers of this man of God for the last 3-1/2 years were fully answered when the people confessed. We read, “And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He is the God; The Lord He is the God” (v 39).

And Elijah now prayed for rain. We read, “And it came to pass in the meanwhile that the heaven was black with clouds and wind and there was a great rain. As his mission was getting to a close, he prayed for a successor to him. We read, “So he departed and found Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him and he with the twelfth; and Elijah passed by him and cast his mantle upon him” (1 King 19:19). Then Elisha arose and went after Elijah and ministered unto him” (v 21). Men who earnestly and fervently prayed, were men of faith who believed in the possibilities of the impossibilities.

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GFTI
17th All India Worker's Conference
16th -19th Oct-2008
Secunderabad

AN OVERVIEW

We eagerly looked forward to that event. The Conference took place from 16th to 19th October 2008 at OM Centre, Secunderabad. God saw that the time we spent together was to our great benefit. The well-known speakers and the receptive hearts of the 350 evangelists and around 50 elders and believers of local churches in Secunderabad made the event a memorable one. It was a joy to be together for four days. The Spirit of God moved in our midst. Everybody wished that many more days were spent together. The scene and mood in OM Centre reflected what the Psalmist said, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity (harmony)" (Ps 133:1). Much life was added to the Conference with the presence of members and elders of City Assemblies and all the GFTI Office bearers and staff. The speakers chosen by God were filled with messages that could elevate the listeners to spiritual realms of immense blessing and value. The speakers were Messrs J.B. Nicholson Jr. and Parayil Kurien from USA and William Yuille from Canada. Their messages did go deep down into the hearts of the listeners in the jam-packed OM Centre auditorium.

The Chairman of GFTI, in his welcome address, thanked God for His mercy in making this event a possibility after a gap of almost five years. Most of the needed resources for a Conference of this magnitude were made available as an answer to our incessant prayers by the assemblies of Parayil Kurien and Paul E. Mathew and we thank the Lord for their generosity and using them. In fact, over the years the Lord stood with us to make His ministry useful to His servants. The ministry of GFTI started 54 years ago through His faithful men like Late Dr. Justus Samuel, Late Mr. Gordon Richie, Late Mr. T.G. Samuel etc. has been a great source of blessing to a large number of Lord's servants, the current strength being 900. This Conference is the 17th one. During the last 5 years, since the last Conference, we have by God's blessings added 375 new workers to the support and prayer list. Part of the Chairman's address is reproduced below.

"I take this opportunity to express my indebtedness to the Lord for the privilege given to me to be a humble servant to the Lord's servants

labouring in the various parts of this country, despite all odds against them such as persecution, insufficient financial supports, lack of basic infrastructural needs like housing and assembly halls, sickness and so on. Ever since the Lord assigned me the role in GFTI, I have been conscious of the needs of the Lord's servants and in fact the incessant prayers of the men working behind GFTI and also those who have burden for this ministry, have sustained this ministry despite the fact that the supports from Indian brethren, both within the country and outside the country, have ignored the usefulness of a ministry like GFTI. Over the years, our sincere desire and prayers that our assembly members may rise up to be examples, have been honoured by the Lord. Bethesda Bible Chapel, with whom I am in fellowship, has prepared both young and old to be good financial supporters of GFTI and they constantly hold the Lord's servants in their prayers. The way the members of Bethesda Bible Chapel and all the Trustees in GFTI bring the cause of GFTI before the Lord, often it appears is not shared in toto by the Lord's servants. We hardly receive any contribution from the assemblies with which the evangelists are involved. If practical fellowship, at least a small amount to GFTI, is not shown in action, we wonder how much the Lord's servants are upholding the ministry of GFTI and this thought often disturbs and discourages us. The wealth at the disposal of Indian brethren is substantial and if a very small percentage has been set aside, the needs of our Lord's servants would have been more than met. Probably, despite all good doctrines to which we are exposed to, the "giving" aspect is devoid of any teaching or conveniently forgotten. The burden and financial supports by J.W. Laing Trust, Echoes of Service, Lord's Work Trust (all in UK) and MSC Canada at this juncture, really encourage us. GMI's support is also on the decline because of the lack of interest of Indian believers though they should have had a concern for India and the usefulness of ministry like GFTI. But on the other hand, the considerable burden shown by individuals like Dr. John Mathew from USA should not go unmentioned.

We will fail in our duty if we do not express some of the wonderful and mysterious way the Lord works behind the scene. A year and half ago, we

sent out our disbursement cheques to all of you expecting the normal remittance as usual from one well-known foreign supporting agency in USA. But that did not happen and we were on our knees. And the Lord used a small assembly in England who were unknown to us and had never in the past sent any gift, to send £.10,000/-. Thereafter we were so much strengthened in our faith in the Lord of George Muller who by faith sustained a large company of orphans”.

GFTI members who passed away during the last 5 years are Messrs M.A. Chacko, S.S. David and E.V. John. Evangelists who went to be with the Lord number 37 and they are S.D. Daniel, Paul S. Kant, V. Devadanam, Victor D. Silva, P.M. Joseph, M. Viswasam, L. Dhanraj, M. Manoharan, Mervie Samuel, E.M. Mathew, K.N. Nina Pillai, M.A. George, T.A. Kurien, Daniel Idicula, V.T. John, Andrew John, M. Peter, K. Pitchaiah, M.G.R. Immanuel, P.I. Abraham, M. Abraham, Y. Moses, Venkatasubbiah, James Titus, B.B. Dakhale, Y. Suvarna Rao, John Das, Y.M. Ruben, A.C. Samuel, P.M. Mathew, A.A. Narayan Paul, A. Aruldass, B. Sommanna, Ch. Joseph, M.M. Mathew K. Isaac and C. John.

We thank the Lord for their service and testimony left behind.

A gist of the messages from the well-known and eminent speakers is given below. We shall try to reproduce the full messages in our next issues for the benefit of the readers.

Mr. J.B. Nicholson, Jr.

His message on Ephesians 3:8-21 stressed on the three ultimate forces (a) vv10-13 – great force – the wisdom of God manifested to the believers. It is comprehensive; He knows everything (b) vv14-16 – the strengthening power – Power of the Holy Spirit manifested in the believers – (c) vv17-19 – the surpassing love of Christ – Love of Christ manifested through the believers.

Ten Tests of Truth:

- 1.Does it in anyway lower my estimate of Christ?
- 2.Does it elevate a man apart from the work of Christ?
- 3.Does it allow for or even encourage sinful practices of a believer?
- 4.Does it fail to distinguish Israel, the Church and the Kingdom?
- 5.Does it place the material over the spiritual?
- 6.Does it confuse the old and the new covenants?
- 7.Does it emphasise the Holy Spirit over the person of Christ?
- 8.Does it require a twisting of the scripture or depend on the obscure passage especially forcing conditions?

9.Does it produce two classes of Christians or two classes of Churches?

10.Does it raise doubts regarding eternal salvation and Christ's finished work?

Mr. Parayil Kurien

He dwelt at length on 1 Corinthian 12:4 to 26.

- 1.Unity – v 12
- 2.Diversity – vv 4, 5
- 3.Interdependence – vv 15, 16
- 4.Sovereign arrangement of each member within the body – v 18
- 5.Identification – vv 25, 26
- 6.Worth – vv 22, 24
- 7.Humility – vv 17-19


Mr. William Yuille

The three messages on Psalm 139 (A Psalm of testimony) were thought provoking and of great blessings.

- 1.vv 1 – 6 – His knowledge – Omniscience – He knows all about me
- 2.vv 7 – 12 – His presence – Omnipresence – in heaven or hell; in the East or in the West; in the darkness or in the light
- 3.vv 13 – 18 – His power – Omnipotence – He made me and cares for me; formed by divine operations (vv 13, 14); made wider operations inspection (v 15)
- 4.vv 19 – 24 – His CONTROL – fashioned according to divine model (v 16); blessed with divine power (vv 17, 18); God's enemies to be judged (vv 19 – 22); allowed David to be tested (vv 23, 24).

The Conference was a great blessing with participants dispersing after the worship meeting on Sunday morning followed by two messages from Parayil Kurien and J.B. Nicholson Jr., Vote of thanks by Mr. George Lazar, Secretary and lunch at 2 P.M. We are thankful to the Christian Assembly, Picket, Secunderabad for their full presence and active participation.

GFTI thanks all the participants including elders and members of city assemblies, the Trustees of GFTI – Mr. Selvin Holmes, Mr. Manickavasakam, Mr. O.T. James, Mr. Abraham Varghese, Mr. Bhagwandas, Mr. John Mathai and Mr. Roy Samuel – and the staff along with Mr. K.A. Mathew, Mr. Manoj, Mr. Shaju Verghese, James Peters, Mr. Shaji Philip and Mr. George John. Their efforts and commitment made the functioning of the Conference smooth. The efforts of evangelists Mr. Suvarna Raju, Mr. Ramana, Mr. Ravi Philip and others gave more liveliness to the efficient running of the Conference. We thank the OM Management for all the services rendered. And everything went on well, with the real presence of the Lord with us and we thank Him.

(Koshy Zachariah) 

THE KINGS OF JUDAH (16,17)

JEHOAHAZ, JEHOIAKIM

Koshy Zachariah

2 Kings 23:30-34; 2 Chr 36:1-4

Contemporary Prophets

Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah

Jehoahaz (means Jehovah holdeth) was twenty three years old when he began his reign in Judah. He did not deserve that name as the Lord God did not hold him at all. In Jeremiah 22:11, his name is mentioned as Shallum, the son of Josiah. This is the name that is recorded in the genealogy given in 1 Chronicle 3:15. There he is one of the four sons; the names of others are Johanan, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. His mother's name was Hamutal (means delight). She would have been a delight to God and to her husband Josiah. To continue with the good work Josiah did, as recorded in the scripture, would have been difficult had she not been a good woman. All good women need not be good mothers, unless they train up the children to be good, doing the will of God. And Jehoahaz was a shame to both his father and mother. "For a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" Proverbs 29:15. It appears that he was not the right choice to inherit the kingdom. But the choice fell on him by the popular vote. We are told, "The people of the land took Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah and anointed him king in his fathers stead" (2 Kings 23:30). He and Zedekiah were born to the same mother (2 Kings 24:18). Jehoahaz was older than Zedekiah by nine years but his name appeared last in the genealogy recorded in 1 Chr 3:15. This is probably due to the very short period of his reign – he reigned only for three months (2 Chr 36:2).

We read of him, "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done" (2 Kings 23:32). We could assume that the sins were idol worship, building high places and mixing with heathen crowd to provoke the Lord. How much wickedness he could perpetuate during this short period of three months is doubtful, but he would have proclaimed freedom to people to revive all the evil things that his father Josiah had put out. And God did not allow him to do more; his rule was only for 3 months.

In Ezekiel 19:1-4, we note that he is likened to a young lion who learned to catch the prey devouring men. He appears to have been a man of violence, doing cruel things to his like and pleasure. And the Lord God put an end to his reign. "And the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem and condemned the land in a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold" (2 Chr 36:3). In 2 Kings 23:33, we read that Pharaoh-nechoh put him in bands at Riblah in the land of Hamath. Probably this happened because Nechoh got a feeling that Jehoahaz leaned towards Assyria against him. Nechoh carried Jehoahaz to Egypt and he remained there forever. Thus his sepulchre is not in the city of David. What a sad end to the human wisdom of getting into the throne without the blessings and knowledge of the Lord God?

JEHOIAKIM

2 Kings 23:34; 24:6;

2 Chr 36:5-8 Contemporary Prophets – Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Ezekiel

Jehoiakim (means God will raise up) was twenty five years old when he took over the kingdom of Judah. In fact, he was installed by the king of Egypt – Pharaoh-Nechoh. His mother's name was Zebudah (means gainfulness or bestowing a gift). He was many years senior to Jehoahaz and was not born of the same mother. It appears that he did not get good training from his mother Zebudah, whose heart was probably bent upon how to gain in every deal. That is why her son Jehoiakim also resorted to gaining wealth and resources at the expense of his subjects. In order to pay the silver and gold levied by Pharaoh-Nechoh, he had to levy taxes from every one according to one's resources. He would have been unhappy with the people of the land for their choice of his younger brother as the king earlier. Now his loyalty was towards the king of Egypt and he did not care about his people's burden. He was in no way different from his brother who was deposed by the king of Egypt. His wickedness is mentioned in Ezekiel 19:5-7. We read that he also "was made a "young lion" and he went up

and down among the young lions, he became a young lion and learned to catch the prey and devoured men. And he knew their desolate places and he laid waste their cities and the land was desolate and the fullness thereof by the noise of is roaring”.

We read in Jeremiah 36:9 that a fast was proclaimed in the fifth year of his reign. Baruch, Jeremiah’s assistant read in the book the words of Jeremiah as given to him by God. The king was informed of this and he ordered the book to be brought and read to him. And we read in vs 22-24 that this was read by Jehudi. When he had read three or four leaves, the king cut it with the penknife and cast it into the fire. They never repented or were afraid on hearing the words. Then Jeremiah sent to the king a personal message which was more awful than the king had heard. “Thus saith the Lord: Thou hast burned this roll saying why hast thou written therein saying”. The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim, king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity” (Jeremiah 36:29-31). To get a glimpse of his wickedness and evils, one could read Jeremiah 36.

We also read in Jeremiah 26:20-23 that Urjah the son of Shemiah, “prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah: and when Jehoiakim the king with all his mighty men and all the princes heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Urjah heard it, he was afraid and fled and went into Egypt; and Jehoiakim the king sent men to Egypt; And they fetched forth Urjah out of Egypt and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king; who slew him with the sword and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people. Instead of repenting, the king killed a servant of God who was only a messenger; wickedness to the core. Therefore, later he was paid in the same coin and we read, “Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah king of Judah. They shall not lament for him saying, Ah my brother or Ah sister. They shall not lament for him, saying,

Ah Lord or Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem” (Jeremiah 22:18-19). And so it happened. Nebuchadnezzar defeated Nechoh king of Egypt (2 Kings 24:7). And we read, “In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up and Jehoiakim became his servant three years; then he turned and rebelled against him” (2 Kings 24:1). It does not appear that Nebuchadnezzar has punished him. But we read, “And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees and bands of the Syrians and bands of the Moabites and bands of the children of Ammon and sent them against Judah to destroy it according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servants the prophets (2 Kings 24:2). We note in 2 Chronicles 36:6 that Nebuchadnezzar bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon. If he had been carried away, he would have returned so that what was recorded in 2 Kings 24:6 was true. “So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers”. But prophecy is only pre-written history and so what is all written about his death according to the prophecy would have come to pass. C. Knapp records, “Josephus states that Nebuchadnezzar finally came and slew Jehoiakim whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls without any burial (Antiquities 10.6.3). So the expression Jehoiakim slept with his fathers simply expresses his death; it is a distinct expression in scripture from “buried with his fathers. A comparison of 2 Kings 15:38 and 16:20 will readily explain this. So the king who denied the prophets body honourable burial, was himself “buried with the burial of an ass”. He mutilated and burnt God’s book and his body was in turn torn and burnt unburied in the scorching sun”.

His name like that of his half brother is not reckoned in the royal genealogy (Mathew 1). He reigned in Jerusalem for 11 years; and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God (2 Chr 36:5).



VINEYARD NEWS

ANDHRA PRADESH

01/11/08

K. Paul, Penugonda

They had conducted a gospel campaign in Uehilli village which is in East Godavari district. The people heard the word with enthusiasm and some came forward accepting the Lord as their personal saviour. Please uphold this ministry in your prayers.

02/11/08

Benarji Raju S., Adoni

They had a special Bible study series from Oct. 9-11 in their Assembly. Bros. Samuel John, Isaac Babu, Punnus and Benarji were the main speakers. Around 200 people attended the meeting. Pray for the spiritual growth of those who attended this meeting.

BIHAR

03/11/08

Abad Bihari Lal, Paria

Here the Assembly activities are going on well. Recently they were beaten up during a gospel outreach programme but the Lord protected them. They had conducted VBS in three places and a special meeting with Bro. Rudal Mandal as the special speaker. Prayers are requested for the following matters: 1. They are planning to conduct a four days gospel campaign in the month of December. 2. They are in need of a two wheeler for the furtherance of the gospel. 3. His father had a stroke and paralysed ON one side completely. 4. His wife Asha John has been suffering from diabetes for long time. 5. Other sick people in the Assembly- Mrs. Uma devi, Kiran Devi and Jyothi.

DELHI

04/11/08

P.A. Samu, Dwaraka

It is informed by our dear brother that he has moved from M.P. to Delhi. Now they are settled in Dwaraka for the furtherance of the gospel. Pray that the ministry here may be fruitful.

KARNATAKA

05/11/08

Silas M. Honganur, Yellapur

Recently six new believers took water baptism in a place called Dharward and God enabled them to

begin an assembly testimony here with their baptism. Please pray for the spiritual growth of these new believers and also for the blessing of the Assemblies in Dharward and Yellapur.

06/11/08

R.S. Mirajkar, Niwara

Here the ministry is going on well. There are eight Telugu speaking Assemblies in Belgaum. The new generation is eager to know the Bible truths. So they have planned a Bible study classes for them on every 2nd and 4th Sunday evenings. Pray that God may open the eyes of the young ones to understand the truths of His word and also for the completion of his Article "fight the good fight" in Marathi.

07/11/08

Alan Manohara, Uduppi

The persecution is severe in this part of the country. They are not able to go out to preach the gospel and even worship the Lord on Sundays. Last few weeks they divided in teams and worshiped the Lord secretly in separate places. The violence also continues in other parts of Karnataka. The churches were attacked in Bangalore, Madikery, Mangalore, and Davangere. The earnest prayers of God's people are solicited for the protection and preservation of the Lord's people and Lord's ministry in various parts of Karnataka.

08/11/08

Ravindran, Nagavally

Here the ministry is progressing well with house visiting and personal Evangelism. God constantly adds new souls into His church and now there are around 40 people gathering for the Sunday worship. For the past thirteen years they have been gathering in the house of our dear brother for the worship and other Assembly activities. So they are desperately in need of an Assembly hall for the gathering of the people of God. Please prayerfully support this ministry.

09/11/08

Pramesh B, Mysore

Here the Assembly is growing through the personal evangelism, youth meetings and children's meetings. They had a special meeting for the sisters on 28th September and a special meeting and baptism service on the 3rd week of October. Please pray for the blessings.

10/11/08

Rathan Naik, Bidar

They as an Assembly is being kept safe in God's hands. They approached the authority for a common

burial ground for the Assemblies of this district. Pray that God may grant them the permission in due time. They also covet prayers for a place for an Assembly hall and for his wife who is suffering from diabetes.

KERALA

11/11/08 **K.K. Varghese, Kodanad**
At kodanad all Assembly activities are going on well with prayer meetings, cottage meetings, sisters meeting, Sunday schools and house visiting in the surrounding places. Moreover they are planning to start the Assembly outreach in the surrounding villages on every Sunday. He has three daughters and one son. But his two year old son Job is mentally retarded from the birth due to some problem during the delivery. Please uphold this child in your earnest prayers.

MADHYAPRADESH

12/11/08 **Ranjith Kumar Bagh, Gwalior**
They had ten days Bible study by bro. Charley John, Agra and Kochumon Elava. They also had a M.P Workers and Elders meeting for three days in the month of August and Bro. George Dawson and Sam Philip were the main speakers. The ministry is being carried out in the villages regularly with the help of Bros. Gabbar Singh Dabra, Rajendra Singh Datia, and Sudhakar Bilanuar. Please uphold these brethren in your prayers.

13/11/08 **V. A. Antony, Satna**
The 69th Gospel Penetration Camp was held from 23-25 Sept. at Marwahi in Bilaspur district, 151km away from the city. Here there is no Assembly testimony. Pray that an Assembly testimony may be established here through this ministry.

MAHARASTRA

14/11/08 **Albert Sunil M., Aurangabad**
They are making use of every opportunity preaching and teaching God's word in and around this area. Recently ten believers obeyed the Lord in the waters of baptism. Prayers are solicited for the growth of this believers.

NAGALAND

15/11/08 **O. Georgekutty, Dimapur**
The work is progressing here in Dimapur among the non-Christian people. They are planning to conduct a VBS for the children during winter vacation

(December- January) in two places. Here the children are addicted to drugs and many do not go to school. Prayers are coveted for the blessings of this meeting.

ORISSA

16/11/08 **C.P. Mathew, Bhubaneswar**
Our dear brother informs that the situation is still very tense in Kandamal area. Forcefully every day many are reconverted. From the Assembly circle one prayer hall at Jodhunathpur was set on fire and destroyed. They also set on fire the motor bike of Bro. S.P. Munna who is working in Chiplima. The Assembly hall at Berhampur and the evangelist there, Bro. C.S. Thomas were targeted and the mob tried to enter inside a few times. But the police reached immediately and a police camp continued for 3 weeks. All other places in the state are coming to normalcy slowly. Please earnestly pray for God's people in Orissa who are constantly persecuted.

17/11/08 **Surendra Takri, Sunabeda**
The Lord continues to add new souls into His Body here in Sunabeda. Some believes expressed their desire to take baptism. The believers here are struggling so much to keep their stand as followers of the Lord. They are regularly visiting all the believers, encouraging them to be steadfast in their faith. Here they are gathering in a rented house and the house rent is so high. They desire to have an Assembly hall of their own to gather together. Please prayerfully support this ministry.

18/11/08 **C.S. Thomas, Berhampur**
The situation here is still tense. Since August 25th Police is giving them some protection because of the prayers of the saints. Two Sundays they could not gather for the worship. Now almost everything is normal. Please continue to uphold them in your prayers.

RAJASTHAN

19/11/08 **T.J. Joseph, Alwar**
They have conducted a Youth Camp under the auspices of the Ebenezer Christian Assembly from October. 8-12. Lord's servants Silas C. Nair, K.M. John, Thomson B. Thomson and K.V. Thomas ministered the word. They also had a separate programme for the kids under the leadership of Abraham Thomas Kochy. Please pray for the blessings of the ones who attended this meeting.

TAMIL NADU

20/11/08 **S. Muthiah, Mudukulathur**
By God's grace the ministry is going on well here. They trust the Lord for the fruitfulness in ministry. Uphold them in your prayers.

21/11/08 **John Cherian, Nilgiris**
They are able to visit many houses with the gospel message these days. Though sometimes there are oppositions, they trust in God to go forward with His strength. They covet prayers.

22/11/08 **Jones Cherian, Madurai**
The Madurai Bible School ministry is being blessed by the Lord. Continue to uphold them in your prayers.

23/11/08 **Shaji T. Paul, Pollachi**
Our dear brother reported that he was threatened by the opponents of the gospel not to preach and worship in the village. Some times they went even to the extent to manhandle him. And they took away all the letters sent to him. Now he is staying in a rented house in Pollachi. Nevertheless he visits the tribal villages regularly. Earnest prayers are solicited for the ministry in Narikkalpatty village and in Pollachi town.

24/11/08 **George Ponniah, Coimbatore**
His older daughter's marriage was conducted in the month of July with Mr. Sam Anand. The Assembly activities at Sular are going on well. Prayers are coveted for the blessings of the newly married couple and also for the growth of this Assembly.

25/11/08 **N. R. Nagandran, Manamadurai**
The ministry in Manamadurai is going on well. There are some opposition for the ministry here. They are not able to do the village ministry. Now they are constructing an Assembly hall and they look to the Lord for his provision to complete it. Please prayerfully support this ministry.

26/11/08 **R. Jayapal, Sankarankoil**
They had a special meeting from 15-17 August. Bro. C.K. John and Sornaraj were the special speakers. Recently some people have accepted the Lord and are ready to take baptism. Prayers are solicited for the blessings of the ministries and also for the good health of our dear brother.

UTTAR PRADESH

27/11/08 **Philipose P.P, Jhansi**
The immense grace of God keeps them well in the Lord's work. They covet our valuable prayers for the following matters: 1. Scripture distribution in Jhansi town during the St. Jude festival. 2. Special meetings for Jhansi and Garhmau Assembly believers from

Nov. 7-9 with Biharilall and Dakpathor as main speakers. 3. Village and town outreach in Lalitpur district of U.P.-for the safety of the team members and salvation of the people. 4. Pray also for the marriage of his daughter.

WEST BENGAL

28/11/08 **Jayanta Das, Kolkotta**
Amidst opposition God's ministry is being carried out by His servants here. On 20th September four brothers and sisters obeyed the Lord in the waters of baptism. Except one sister all are from non-Christian background. Also the same day the Assembly here commended bro. Amit Adhikary for the Lord's work. Prayers are solicited for these matters and also for sister Ruma Saha, who lost her son in the month of August and she had already lost her husband in 2005.

29/11/08 **Timothy Das, Rajapur**
They are planning to conduct the workers family conference in the month of December. The conference will be four days for fellowship and getting to know each others family. They expect around 110 participants. The total expenditure would be approx. 2.5 lakh. They place this matter before the Lord and for the prayerful support of the believers.

OTHER MATTERS

30/11/08 **Bethesda Gospel Hall, Kolkata**
With the prayer and support of the brethren they were able to host Kolkata 2000 convention in Dec. 2000. Now they have five brethren Assemblies in and around Kolkata with approximately hundred believers. They have now decided to hold the Kolkata 2008 convention from December 18-21. Around 200 participants are expected to attend from different parts of Bengal and Jharkand.

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KNOW YOUR FRIENDS AT SBC

ISHMAEL PURTY

I was born and brought up in a nominal Christian family in Assam. My family consisted of five members. Being a nominal Christian I attended church but did not live a God-pleasing life; I was walking according to the ways of the world. At the age of 19, a servant of God met me in my village and shared the Gospel with me. Then I looked at my life and saw that I was a sinner. However, I did not commit my life to the Lord at that time.



Later, I went to Alwar in Rajasthan to study the Bible at NIBI; after three months of study there, we had a youth camp in which I heard the Word of God speaking directly to me; That day I realized the need to be born again and confessed my sins to Jesus Christ and accepted Him as my Lord and Saviour 21st Oct-2006. I was baptized in March 2007. Then I continued my studies at NIBI and completed the two years Diploma course. Further, I had a desire to study the Bible more; so I joined SBC in Chennai and I am now studying in second year. God willing after my studies I desire to serve the Lord who loved me and died for me. Please keep me in your valuable prayers.



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.

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.

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