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# Blessing

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*From the General Overseer...*

## **2007-YEAR OF FAITH!**

Beloved Friends,

Grace and Peace be multiplied to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Author and Finisher of our faith.

As we enter the 37th year of the ministry of the Blessing Youth Mission our hearts are filled with gratitude for His guidance, direction and faithfulness all through these years. Who indeed can despise humble beginnings? As a group of young college students when we met to pray in response to His unction, little did we realise that God would honour our faith and obedience to such gigantic proportions that today a college prayer cell has grown into a missionary organisation. To God be the Glory!

The Lord has led us to declare this year as the **YEAR OF FAITH**. We walk by faith and not by sight. Kindly read the article written by Dr. M. Arthur John on the achievements of our forefathers through faith. The Israelites' exodus from Egypt was conceived in faith and their possession of the promised land was achieved by faith. However, their faith walk was be-riddled with issues that detracted them from entering the promised land in time. They were to contend with an overflowing Jordan, counter many onslaughts and wander in the wilderness before finally reaching the land of milk and honey. All through their journey their faith was tested and retested! Walking in faith does not mean a life without problems. On the contrary it is a life filled with problems of varied complexities. Faith drives us to overcome the challenges of the world. **Our faith is the victory that overcomes the world** (1 Jn 5:4).

The lack of faith has serious consequences. It debilitates our growth, destroys our purposefulness and disintegrates the very fabric of our standing in Christ. Acting in faith on the contrary should help us conquer the attractions of the world and live a life of victory.

Let us step out for God by faith this year and lay hold of the victory that is ours in Faith in every facet of our lives. Our faith will be met with His faithfulness which in turn will help change our lives and those that we come in contact with.

I praise God for the second and third line of leaders God has graciously raised in the BYM to take up the leadership responsibilities over time. I am happy to introduce our dear brother E. L. Mathansingh, the Field Ministry Coordinator of the BYM who will be the Executive Coordinator of the Mission from January 2007.

Brother R. Stanley and I met Mr. E.L. Mathansingh in Thanjavur way back in the year 1969 as a college student. He has been associated with the BYM since then. As a student, college professor and as a missionary he has played various roles in strengthening the ministry. After serving 12 years in North India, he has moved to our headquarters in Vellore with his dear wife Mrs. Lalitha J. Mathasingh who experienced a miraculous healing recently (see page 12). Hereafter, all correspondence related to the ministry of the BYM may be addressed to the Executive Coordinator, in our Vellore address. A team of leaders chosen from among both fulltime missionaries and volunteers constitute the Administrative Committee which makes policies and gives advice and guidelines to the Executive Coordinator and other Coordinators who execute the work at various levels. The Executive Coordinator is assisted by the State / Regional level Coordinators alongwith the Departmental Overseers and Organisers. Brother R. Stanley is the Chief Advisor of the Mission. I will continue to give General Oversight, while Dr. M. Arthur John will continue to be the Chairman.

In line with the National Consultation on Church Planting and Growth conducted in Vijayawada recently, the leaders have also planned another Consultation Meet on Revival and Literature Ministry towards the end of January 2007 in the OM Centre, Secunderabad. As the leaders and the teams prepare to act in faith to attack the enemy's territories and populate heaven in 2007 my plea with that of Apostle Paul, is, "Brothers, pray for us" (1 Thess 5:25).

Come let us walk in faith and dream the impossible, overcome the insurmountable and achieve the unattainable for God all through 2007!!

Your fellow faith worker,

—A. LIONEL

# THE FAITH RACE

*Dr. M. Arthur John*

Christian life is compared to a race. Apostle Paul said, "I do not run like a man running aimlessly" (1 Cor 9:26a). Towards the close of his life and ministry he declared, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race", and added, "I have kept the faith" (2 Tim 4:7). The faith race Paul talks about appears to be characterized by strong determination and commitment. This could very well be stated as an 'Obstacle race.' "Fighting the good fight" and overcoming the obstacles are not very easy and therefore many who commence the race do not successfully complete it. The author of the Book of Hebrews discerned the inevitable challenges the Hebrew believers of the first century were confronted with and encouraged them to continue the race despite crippling hardships, hence the pregnant phrase, "Let us not lose heart." The race is to be run and run well. In an era where the 'also rans' abound, the Book of Hebrews lays out certain foundational principles the faithful-runner needs to consider while he pursues the race, as a seasoned long distance runner. Time spent reflecting these *mantras* and applying them in our lives should assist us run our races well.

## ***1. Consider the cloud of witnesses***

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us...run" (Heb 12:1a). The author begins this theme with 'therefore' and thus links it to the earlier chapter where the subject of faith is poignantly captured drawing on several examples of faith-runners; starting from the Book of Genesis. Their number is significant, 'a great cloud of witnesses.' As one runs through the long winding, unfamiliar and desolate patches in one's life, it is

inevitable to feel lonely and isolated. The Bible spells out that we are not alone—there is a cloud of witnesses who eagerly observe us as we traverse through the tough paths of life. It is as though the cloud of witnesses whispering softly; 'A Christian's calling is to swim against the current and to have victory over all under currents of this world by—FAITH!'

The Faith Race commenced after the fall of man and the subsequent promise of the Redeemer in Genesis third and fourth chapters. The witnesses of faith detailed in Hebrews 11 bring a completely fresh perspective to the notion of faith. "By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain" (Heb 11:4). He had to pay the cost with his own life to complete his faith (Gen 4:8). Then it was Enoch. He walked with God and his walk on earth pleased God (without faith it is impossible to please God). This propelled him to overcome the gravitational pull of this world so as to be with God forever (Heb 11:5,6).

Noah is another witness. God's word urged him to build an ark for him and his family when there were no signs of any flood. The world of his time possibly mocked him. But Noah built the ark in faith overcoming the mockery of the ungodly (Heb 11:7). Abraham commenced his faith race in obedience to God's call to leave his country and kindred to the place of God's choice. In accordance to God's promise he received substantial earthly blessings and became very rich man (Gen 13:2). Yet he did not set his heart on the riches but "by faith he made his home in the Promised Land, like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents" (Heb 11:9). What a lesson for the faith-runners! In an era where worldly

attractions besought young and old alike, the rich Abraham refused to be attracted to the worldly belongings but set his sights on the heavenly goals! By faith he overcame the laws of nature and brought forth the promised son. By faith he was willing to offer the long desired son as a sacrifice in response to God's desire.

Moses had the rare opportunity to be known as the son (Prince) of Pharaoh's daughter. He was entitled to enjoy the princely pleasures of this world and possess the treasures of Egypt. He set aside those pulls by faith and regarded sufferings and disgrace shared with his brothers as of superior value to inherit a better reward from God than the pleasures and treasures of Egypt, which were temporal. He walked by seeing Him who was invisible rather than running behind the visible attractions of this world that he could see (Heb 11:24-28).

The people of Israel survived from drowning in the Red Sea and overcame the attack of the Egyptian army by faith (Heb 11:29). They overpowered the strong fortress of Jericho by faith. Other witnesses like Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Daniel, Samuel and the prophets conquered kingdoms, administered justice, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames and escaped the edge of the sword!

The stories of faith are not merely one of glowing successes! Within their 'Faith Race' some faced jeers and flogging; some chained and imprisoned; some stoned to death; some sawed into two; some put to death by the sword; some went about in sheep and goat-skins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated. Others wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground. They did not receive what was promised (Heb 11:36-39). They ran their race in faith in anticipation of a better country—a heavenly one.

Since we have such a great cloud of witnesses of those who crossed all obstacles in life by faith, lived their destinies to the fullest and reached their final destination without experiencing the fructification of God's promises, we who are enrolled on this faith race have the same grace that sustained them to boldly pursue and overcome the hurdles by the enablement of the Author and Finisher of our faith.

## ***2. Throw off the weights and run.***

"Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles...and run" (v 1b). The NIV translation reads as 'every hindrance', while the NKJV version calls it 'every weight.' Imagine an athlete partaking in the Olympics final, riddled with loads of weight attached to him. He is destined to failure. One need not be Einstein to figure that out. It is logically impossible to win a race where distractions impair the focus of the athlete. With the best of winds aiding him, he is destined to fail. So it is with the spiritual race. Hence, we are called to locate the weights or hindrances and shed them off as we run.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus said the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth make the kingdom life unfruitful. These two are sure shot weights that pull one down as one runs the Christian race. Many believers in the course of their faith race take on the weight of unnecessary worries and wallow in anxiety. Unnecessary anxiety results in unproductive lives. Jesus questioned, "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" and commanded saying, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear." Only pagans run after these. God's children are called to focus on the Kingdom of God and

His righteousness (Mt 13:27,25). The Kingdom mentality needs to replace the kin-dom mentality, which invariably ensures anxieties and worries.

Covetousness is another unnecessary weight. To the rich young man who approached Jesus with the question, "What good thing must I do to get eternal life?" Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasures in heaven. Then come, follow Me." The Bible says, "When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because *he had great wealth*" (Mt 19:16,21,22).

Great faith-runners, even fulltime servants of God are no exception to the snare of covetousness. Apostle Paul speaks of his coworker, Demas who loved the world and deserted him (2 Tim 4:10). Since this weight is so compelling and counterproductive, Apostle John admonished the Church saying, "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives for ever" (1 Jn 2:15-17). The words of Jesus, "Remember Lot's wife!" (Lk 17:32) should be etched in templates of stone and placed all through the run-way lest we be side-tracked and be consumed by the attachments of the world.

Another weight that detracts our effectiveness in our faith race is "the sin that so easily entangles us." We are called to run the race of faith in a sinful world. Sin is rampant since the world is "under the control of the evil one" (1 Jn 5:19). By its very definition SIN—Satan IN, ensnares us as in the Garden

of Eden. Therefore, in our struggle against sin, we are called to resist it to the point of shedding our blood (Heb 12:4). In Christendom today saying an emphatic 'NO' to sin is becoming rarer. Saints are learning to compromise with sin. The consequences are telling. The message of the gospel is yet to reach the ends of the earth. We need youth who would like Joseph, state, "How could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" He paid the cost for his stand against sin by being imprisoned and harassed by his master's wife (Gen 39:9,19-20). Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego preferred to be burnt in the furnace of fire than yielding to sin. We need the spirit of such faith-runners to descend upon Christendom today.

While these are some examples of the unnecessary weights that we are to toss off in the course of our faith race, the Scriptures are emphatic, "Everything that hinders should be thrown off". An excellent example is that of Apostle Paul, who considered the legitimate privileges of apostleship as weights in his race to present the claims of Christ to the distracted world. That is the quintessence of the faith race!

### ***3. Run with perseverance.***

"Let us run with perseverance" (v-1c). Running the race is grueling and perhaps excruciating. As a consequence we become tired and weary. Weariness results in slowing down, sitting, resting, stopping or even quitting. As we continue the race the significance of patience cannot but be emphasized. God the Father is the Author of this virtue. He is called the "God of patience" (Rom 15:5 NKJV). Christ exemplified it (2 Thess 3:5) and The Holy Spirit, the source (Gal 5:22). The only way to inherit this value is to be engorged in the Triune God so that we by His grace may complete the race.

Abraham is a good example of patience at work. God promised Abraham, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants" (Heb 6:14). But Abraham had to wait patiently for many years to experience the fulfillment of that promise (v15). The Lord said to him, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you;...and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen 12:1-3). But since the fulfillment of the promise was delayed, Abram was wearied in his faith and complained, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir" (Gen 15:3). The wearied mind and body often questions the validity of God's promise. Delayed fulfillment is a potent tool in God's school of faith to engender patience. To Abram's question of God's providence, the Lord responded, "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir" (v 4). This was an affirmation of His promise and an interim encouragement. During our wearied times we are assured of God's encouragement lest we stumble and fall. Cheered by God, "Abram believed the Lord" (v 6). The spikes and troughs in Abram's race of faith is reflective of the state of the Christians at the race.

Time passed and Abram was resigned in his mind that Ishmael would be his heir. Man's weaknesses cannot limit God. In His next visitation the Lord iterated, 'Sarai will bear a child for him in her old age,' Weariness results in possible disbelief. The man, who obeyed God without as much as a question and moved to an unknown land, now resorts to question the explicit word of God, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?" (Gen 17:15-17). God's promise

was unwavering. Abram's confidence however wavered with the passage of time. Hence when God visited Abraham at the age of 99 and reiterated His promise, Abraham's partner Sarah laughed. But in this occasion God set a time saying, "Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time **next year** and Sarah will have a son" (Gen 18:14). The learning is clear. Faith-runners can not expect God to reveal the timings for the fulfillment of His promises. Hence Jesus advised His disciples, "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority" (Acts 1:7). Our race is a "Faith" race. We are to continue patiently despite the delays and possible unbelief. Like the Psalmist we will do well to confess, "I trust in you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in your hands," and persevere in our race (Psa 31:14,15).

Patience gets rewarded. Perseverance pays. Tidings of joy visited Abraham and Sarah at the ripe old age of 100 and 90 years respectively, when Isaac was born. However, the promise of God concerning the multiplication of his descendants as the stars of the sky and the sand of the sea shore was still a visage, far away, a mirage that defied human perception. But Abraham the faith runner continued his faith race unwavering in his faith that one day God would fulfill His promise. He saw the fulfillment of the promise with eyes of faith and persevered in his race (Heb 11:11-13). That is the kind of faith race that pleases God.

#### ***4. Run within your track***

"Let us run...the race marked out for us" (v 1d). Those who participate in the running race are assigned a track to run. Each one is to run within the specified track. We as believers are called to run the faith race on the track marked out for each. The calling differs

for each. Apostle Paul wrote, "Each one should retain the place that the Lord assigned him and to which God called him... Each one should remain in the situation he was in when God called him. Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you... brothers, each man, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation God called him to" (1 Cor 7:17-24). Here lies an important principle for effectively running the race. In an age where one often vies for the other's portfolio, prefers the neighbors' track over one's own and seeks after the fellow citizen's status, the Biblical directive is clear; run within your track.

This is even more critical within the spiritual realm. With regard to different spiritual gifting and ministries Apostle Paul wrote, "Just as each of us have one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many, form one body, and each member belongs to all others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully" (Rom 12:4-8).

But today, in Christendom we see a dismal reversal! Ministers and ministries copy each other. Mass appeal is a deciding factor for ministers to choose their ministries irrespective of their gifting and calling. When perceivably attractive ministries such as Prophesying, Healing, Miracle-working, Teaching, etc., attract crowds the methods employed by particularly effective ministers in that turf, are blindly aped without clearly ascertaining the scriptural soundness of such methods.

This is not running within the track. The initial semblance of success experienced by such will soon give way to failure. For which short-distance runner can weather the ordeal of long-distance running and which long-distance runner can summon the speed and pace of short-distance dashes? God wills each one to run and minister within one's calling and finish the faith race. Apostle Paul warned, "If any man builds...using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will show for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned he will suffer loss" (1 Cor 3:12-15). While it is good to aim for quantity, when it is at the cost of quality and in explicit disregard to God's approval, we incur heavy loss and loose face. May the Lord give us this insight for our faith race which includes both life and ministry.

### ***5. Fix your eyes on the goal and run***

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith" (v 2). Athletes ought to have the goal well set before their eyes in order to win the prize. Losing sight of the end point at the beginning, midway or at any point within the race will result in serious consequences; a sure failure. Clarity of the objective and the goal to be achieved are so much an integral part of the race. Apostle Paul questioned the faith runners of the Corinthian Church, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize" (1 Cor 9:24). He had a clear goal for his faith race. He said, "I do not run like a man running aimlessly" (1 Cor 9:26). His goal was Christ Jesus. No other goal will do. No other objective can be set. No other purpose will serve. No other

reason could replace the glorious goal of his race! Jesus the Alpha and Omega was purpose and reason for his existence. He said, "I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow to attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil 3:10,11). Nothing compared to unsurpassable knowledge of God, no sacrifice greater, no difficulty mammoth, no distraction compelling, no sin alluring enough to dissuade him from consistently expending himself on the race. He said, "I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish that I may gain Christ" — the Goal (Phil 3:8).

Paul's concept of Christian faith race was comprehensive. When he made clear of the goal, his heart's desire and mind's determination were in complete synch. He exercised strict discipline in pursuance of the goal. He said, "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever ...I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself not be disqualified for the prize." Thus, he disciplined his spirit, soul and body and pressed toward the mark with an attitude of a winner, 'Let come what may, I should win the prize.' He was doubly cautious in his discipline since his calling was to be a preacher of the Gospel. Hence the responsibility to strive all the more to win the prize (1 Cor 9:27).

Describing his ultimate desire as knowing Christ and the power of His resurrection, Paul, highlights sharing in His sufferings and becoming like Him

in His death (Phil 3:10). In Hebrews 12th chapter, the author presents Christ, our Goal, and directs us to fix our eyes on Jesus who endured the cross, scorning its shame (Heb 12:2). Paul's choice of describing Jesus is insightful.

Of the several names pronounced by Isaiah in his prophesy concerning Jesus' birth; Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6) none have been picked up by Paul! Instead he calls the faith runner to fix his eyes on the suffering Christ. As we press towards the crowning Day, we are not to lose sight of the path of the cross. Some one said, "no cross, no crown." Apostle Paul wrote of his experiences in the faith race. To Corinthians he wrote: "We always carry around in our body His death so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body...we are being given over to death for Jesus' sake... death is at work in us..." (2 Cor 4:10-12). Outwardly they were wasting, yet inwardly they were being renewed day by day. They considered the troubles and hurdles as momentary and looked at the eternal glory which outweighs them all. They did not fix their eyes on what is seen but on what is unseen. What an example! As we run the faith race let us not lose focus on the goal but continue to revere the cross that the crown be revealed!

Beloved readers, as we enter the Year of Faith, may we align our lives and ministry to God's counsel and continue our faith-race considering the great cloud of witnesses, shedding off all weights and sins, with great patience and endurance according to our gifts and calling fixing our eyes constantly on Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. The assurance of a crown is ours. Best wishes for a good race in the Year of Faith! f

# THE CRADLE OF WISDOM

*Dr. Lilian Stanley*

To get the first glimpse of wisdom in the Bible we don't have to go too far; it is there in the book of Genesis. It is in the second chapter itself. However after reading the entire Bible we know, wisdom dates far back into unknown times, even before the world was created. The prophesy about the king of tyre flows into the description of the wisest of creations, the anointed cherub, just as a river merges into the sea. His description is found in the book of Ezekiel chapter 28 and Isaiah 14.

He was the anointed cherub who God established to guard His throne. He was a creation of God and was in the holy mountain. He was full of wisdom, even wiser than Daniel and perfect in beauty. He knew everything and there was no secret for him. His business wisdom made him rich. He was extremely beautiful and therefore his heart, was lifted up. He corrupted his wisdom and said "I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods." But God said, "You are a man, not a god" and threw him out of the mountain of God. Thus started the over ambitious pursuit of man to get to sit on the divine throne.

Where did this thrust-out cherub, Lucifer land? May be in the then existing world, to make it chaotic, void, without form and dark. So when God recreated the world, he was there waiting for an opportunity to take revenge on God for his ruthless dismissal perhaps.

Now God was very careful in his creation. He created a being and gave him topmost wisdom and beauty and he exalted himself to the place of God and fell. Iniquity was found in him. God did not want the same thing to happen to the man he created. So even though He created man in his own image, He kept one thing from him—the ability to discern good and evil. May be God thought it better to give him His wisdom in grades. God did not intend to keep man away from the tree of life, but

He gave definite warning not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil to spare him the same fate of the police cherub that is, the second death!

But Lucifer—as the anointed cherub was called, was keen on getting man on his side as co-inhabitant of his home—Hades or hell! He knew the lure was the longing to be equal with God and the whipping desire to be as wise as God. He knew for certain, woman, rather than the man will fall flat before the offer. The serpent was cunning with demonic wisdom (Js 3:15). "You shall not surely die. For God knows, the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" said the serpent, meaning, God *chumma* said you will die. He wants you to keep off the fruit because He doesn't want you to eat it and become as wise as He. How false! For the Bible says we shall be like Him when we see Him. That's why he created man in His image. When he became a sinner God said, "Be holy as I am holy" the first step to becoming as wise as God. In other words, man's short cut to acquire wisdom was a total disaster.

Satan's aim was perfect and the woman nibbled at the bait—wisdom! She took the lead to transgression and perhaps that's why even today the woman is seen as the unwise half. The woman's primary attraction was not just the fruit but the fruit of the fruit ie the knowledge of good and evil and the status of God. It was a tree desirable to make one wise. She talked her husband into eating it (3:17). What did she talk? May be, "See, you'll become as wise as God. He has kept the knowledge of knowing good and evil from us. Take, eat. See, I have eaten and I have not died. Let's become gods." Blah, blah, blah. At that moment man traded his innocence for the forbidden knowledge. If he had waited he would have gained it in due course with

*(Contd. page 15)*

## LATEST BLESSINGS!

*Dr. Mrs. Lilian Stanley*

When the New Year breaks forth and the old recedes into history there are many things to remember and glorify God. As the BYM looks back... Three years ago when the Administrative set up changed there was a lot of anxiety. Can we run this white elephant? Can we feed over 300 missionaries? Can we run a monthly magazine? Will our partners continue to trust and support us? Today we rejoice that none of our missionaries were not paid on time. We had three articles for the magazine and the issue rolled off the press. Now it is three years and more writers. All our bills have been paid. God is faithful. You have made this possible by your faithful support and we glorify God whenever we think of you.

Now for the news. The most encouraging is the creative thinking of our voluntary workers. A team of our brothers from Thiruvallur visited our mission station Chitling (Tamilnadu). They interviewed the first generation believers—drunkards turned devotees, those who were put out of the village and forced to live as outcasts for their faith sake, missionaries and their children. They have put all this in a poignant VCD (Tamil). It is very moving and stirring. It will be released in the forth coming camp for young girls—Aroma. Congratulations Mr. Isaiah and Mr. Manuel for spending your own money and working 20 days and nights to bring this VCD to shape. God will honour your pure motives. (Contact address: Mr. Isaiah Selvakumar, 78/7 Thatco Nagar, Thirupatchur Post, Thiruvallur 631 203, Mobile 9444496492, prize Rs. 50/-). Those doing promotional work among Tamils will receive a free copy of the same.

We thank Mr. T. Rabi, Bangalore for floating the idea of writing the biographies of Indian missionaries. Following his suggestion we want to conduct a contest. You may select any missionary who has worked for atleast 20 years in any recognised mission which is a member of the India Missions Association, visit them, collect information, photographs etc. and present the biography before the end of this year. The first prize will be worth Rs. 5000/-; second 3000/- and third 2000/-. Your labour will bless the hearts of many and, who knows, encourage many to follow

their footsteps. Dear volunteers, missionaries and friends, if you have any such original ideas please let us know. God does not give all ideas to one person.

Bro. E. L. Mathansingh and Bro. A. Jeyaraj participated in the Triennial Conference of the Asia Missions Association in Ephesus, Turkey and returned with rich experiences. Participants represented 28 countries. The study tour that followed took them around the Bible Land spread out in Turkey, including the places of the Seven Churches mentioned in the Book of Revelation. On their way back Bro. Mathansingh ministered in Italy, France and Germany and Bro. Jeyaraj in Bahrain, Muscat and Dubai. Let us pray that in the coming days our missionaries who have never travelled abroad will get an opportunity to see the other side of the globe. They deserve it.

My husband and I had a fruitful ministry in the USA. Special thanks to Mr. Samuel Jones Dadala and team for the concern they have for the BYM, Solomon and Vanitha for stuffing my suitcase with gifts for missionaries and their kids and the so many others who showered their love on us for God's sake.

We thank Rev. Vasanth Edward and members of the Shiloh Church for sponsoring two more of our missionaries. There was a Missionary Jubilation in Tirippur, the Textile City of India on 10 Dec 2006. Motivated by the missionary challenge of Mr. Victor P. Lawrence of Madurai nine families have come forward to sponsor nine



*Orissa Native missionaries Dedication  
on 10 Dec 2007 at Tiruppur*

native missionaries from Orissa. Dr. M. Arthur John and Mr. E. L. Mathansingh ministered in this Sponsorship Service. How will they preach except they be sent? So we thank all our senders who hold the rope as these missionaries descend into the dark places to release the souls bound therein.

Mrs. Indrani of Hyderabad has given away her son's almost new bike for the ministry as he has left for the US. Miss Barnabas of Katni (Madhya Pradesh) has written off all her household articles for God's work. God's kingdom expands fast through your acts of selflessness. There are many more widow's mites not mentioned here but celebrated in heaven. Sacrifice is the water for the missionary garden. Recently in a December issue of the Hindu, I read the following lines by Michael Hanson: "Enormous amounts of money are swilling around. Everyday, more sickening news appears of someone making, or spending billions, then, turn the page, and there's starving, raggedy, sick persons scraping around for the old crust. But there is scarcely a squeak of outrage." C'mon, let's squeak!

We are thankful to you for being so sensitive to the needs we present. Some time ago we had asked help for an orphan boy from Alnavar (Karnataka) for his education. You responded promptly and he is now progressing well in his studies. Reading about widow Kanthabai in the October issue a 77 year old friend has sent help to her. We simply say a, 'Thank you' for bringing a smile on the face of the poor. God will enter your name in His infallible computer for future reference.

Whole of last year the amount we spent from the general fund of the mission for the treatment of missionaries was only Rs. 27,000/-. The huge balance amount was spent by you. Whenever we appealed for help for a missionary you always stepped in. That's really wonderful. We have shoulders to lean on. Please pray for the health and safety of missionaries and their children.

You have generously contributed towards the Christmas clothing allowance for missionaries. All the staff celebrated a joyous Christmas. Some of them could have the children with them and some could not, because of their studies. They remembered you with gratitude as they worshipped the little Babe. Thank you so much for making it possible.

Sister Rajalaxmi John has collected more than 250 new, beautiful and expensive shawls and has sent them for the poor. We imagine the poverty stricken covered in these exquisite warm clothing and sleeping peacefully. How true that because baby Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the manger and became poor that the poor have become rich. May your love in action ignite the hearts of many.

It is thrilling to know that our ministry in Orissa is 30 years old. What started as a mustard seed has today become a banyan tree. 240 congregations have been raised; 90 churches have been built; 5500 baptized and 3 Children Homes run. A clinic is functioning at Ramagiri and relief work done in the Western belt. The labours, trials, pains, tears and triumphs of our missionaries are worth recording with a golden pen. I still remember Bro. Ponnusamy's bloated and jaundiced body when he was dying of malaria. But death was defeated and he is alive today. How wonderful it would be if any of you can take the pains to work to write down the history of our Orissa ministry. It will be a lasting legacy.

Two young girls came to our Ramagiri clinic covering their faces. Their faces were badly infected and festering and they lamented about their condition. They were sent away with medicines, good news and prayer. After a week they came bright and smiling with no trace of the infection. Our new lab set up there has taken to its wings.

Deena and Elisha (Chattisgarh) regularly visit Basna village to conduct worship service for 30-40 baby believers. They addressed the partners meet in Jhansi, attended by 80 people Mr. Avineesh Lal is our representative there.

Missionary Esther Karunakaran escaped a major electrical accident when a tree fell on a wire crossing their house and sparks started flying from the box. By the grace of God word was quickly passed on and the main put off averting a disaster. Your prayers protect us.

A Health Centre was built in Pungamaduvu (Tamilnadu) with the help of Oman Tamil Christian Congregation. We thank Rev. Sadhu Satyaraj, the Presbyter and Mr. Charles, the President. Dr. Jacob Chacko, Paediatric Surgeon, CMC Hospital, Vellore inaugurated it for the glory of God. 86 patients were treated that day.



*Health Centre Dedication  
on 7 Dec 2006 at Pungamaduvu*



Masil Dayan writes: "Palamalai ministry is making headway. Shakuntala was blessed with a baby after 7 years of marriage and Palaniammal after 12 years. We have purchased 92 cents land. We will soon be putting up a Health Centre here. All the building materials have to be taken up the hills by donkey or people. Pray." Thanks to our Tuticorin team who screened a gospel film and preached the gospel here under the leadership of Mr. Peter. We are very proud that our service in Palamalai hills was published in Dhinakaran Daily. People have so well accepted our ministry there. Pray for the over 6000 people who live up these hills.



Mrs. Lalitha Mathan-singh writes: "In July 2006, I was diagnosed for an advanced ovarian cancer, (stage 4) and I had to fly from Lucknow to Chennai. When I was admitted in CMC Hospital in Vellore, I had little chance of survival. But the Lord promised: 'The Lord deli-

vers...The Lord protects and preserves your life...He will bless and sustain you on sick bed and restore you from the bed of illness' (Psa 41:1-3). Many were praying and pleading to God during the time of crisis along with my family members. I had to cross difficult times—a major surgery, six cycles of chemotherapy...By the abundant grace of God I have recovered fast and in the recent evaluation the doctors declared that I am perfectly normal. Yes, the Lord's name is Wonderful! With gratitude my husband and I thank all those who prayed, sent encouraging messages and contributed towards the medical treatment."

In the 14 States we work, Christmas was celebrated in numerous villages, Blind Schools, Homes, Hostels, Minor Jails, Prisons etc. Pray for a rich harvest.

In these days of magazines publishing testimonies of headache and toothache getting healed we would like to receive from you testimonies of how you won a soul. Please write to us.

Till yesterday Shibu Soren was an honourable minister. Today he is a convicted murderer. Imagine someone guilty of corruption and murder deciding the fate of the country and its citizens! News telecast of Christians and fake bishops are embarrassing. Let us pray for the leaders of our country and our spiritual leaders.

May God strengthen our Faith and help us grow in Faith this year. We wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year! f

### **Writing Contest for Youth!**

*Here is an oppoportunity for young people to use your talents. Write on "How I want my Parents to be" in four pages of foolscap paper, neatly typed and send it to us before the end of March 2007. If you want to remain anonymous write on some other name. Write your address on the top of the first page alongwith your telephone number, age and e-mail id if you have. Keep a copy for you since the manuscript will not be returned. Include a passport size photograph. Any one 25 or less can participate. Wishing you all the best.*

Dr. Lilian Stanley  
Blessing Youth Mission  
Church Colony, Vellore 632 006

# *News from Fields*

*Compiled by Mohan Deenadhayalan*

The Blessing Youth Mission has stationed 322 missionaries in 14 States of India, namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, for revival ministries and cross-cultural missionary evangelism leading to church planting in churchless places. The news of various fields is compiled here for PRAISE and PRAYER.

## **ANDHRA PRADESH**

Â The Lord helped us to conduct Revival Meeting at Guntur on 1 Nov 2006. 70 ladies from different denominations participated. Missionary Ebenezer from Vellore challenged them for Holy living and Soul winning. Three of them enrolled themselves as pledge partners and six of them committed to pray for Missionary Work.

Â On 26 Nov 2006 *Love Bible* Programme for youth was conducted in Vizianagaram. Needed prayer support for raising Bible Lovers.

Â Vijayawada Bible Seminary had arranged a meeting for professionals. The Andhra Pradesh branch of BYM took active part in their discussions to reach the elite groups of our country specially those of Vijayawada.

Â Kindly pray for the following: Swarnalatha, Sarada, Devarani and Vijayavardhini (Childless); Susan, Esther (Sinusitis); Manu (Asthma); Vijayalakshmi (Cancer); pradeep, Kalyani, Sham Prakash, Shanthi Priya (Marriage settlement).

## **GUJARATH**

Â Praise God for the Deborah team of Nadiad who distributed the gospel literature in Khambodaj village. They also visited the Christians with Blessing books. Six members participated in the ministry.

Â Rs. 8500/- worth Blessing books and CD's were sold in Rajkot and CTM area of Ahmedabad on 21-24 Oct 2006 by five member team. Praise God for the voluntary help of Mr. Jeyakumar (Ahmedabad) and Mr. Nehemiah (Porbandar).

Â The Vadodara Tamil friends have come forward to support our native worker through prayer and finance from the month of Oct 2006.

Â Pray for the special anointing upon the following people who are coordinating the city ministries in Gujarat: Mr. Jeyakumar—Ahmedabad, Mr. Peter Manikam—Vadodara, Mr. Nehemiah—Sourashtra belt, Mr. Sanjay and Mr. Sallins—Nadiad.

Â The ladies team in Nadiad joyfully involved themselves in collecting subscription for our Gujarati magazine in a special campaign organized. They raised Rs. 2065/- to build God's Kingdom.

Â Kindly pray for the following: A girl of 2½ years (Blood cancer), Our native worker Mr. Narpat's mother (Kidney stone).

## **JHARKHAND**

Â Mr. J. Santhakumar and Mr. Russo also participated in the Partners Meet in Hazaribagh and shared God's Word on the 26th Nov 2006. Literature worth Rs. 5000/- were sold.

Â The Blessing Family Retreat conducted in Jamshedpur was attended by 200 people. 150 people participated in a special meeting conducted in the CNI Church at Hazaribag. Mr. J. Santhakumar preached in all these meetings.

## **KARNATAKA**

Â Praise God for our Missionary Mrs. Ruth Nalavade and her daughter who were saved miraculously from a mishap caused by the Mosquito coil. Half of their bed was burnt.

Â God blessed the Literature Drive Programme at Raichur. Our missionaries could distribute the Blessing Literature and Cassettes worth Rs. 18,410/- and they could establish good contacts there for the future ministry.

Â Twelve persons are ready to join the Church at Jamkhandi by fulfilling the Lord's Command.

Â Four two-wheelers are needed for the ministry in Karnataka State.

Â Please pray for a break through in the Gowli Tribal ministry in Karnataka.

Â Pray for the availability of a suitable land at Gullapur, to construct a worship shed.

## **MADHYA PRADESH**

Â Hinmath, Komal and Malkhan are taking keen interest in the Gospel. Kindly pray for their salvation.

Â Mrs. Shiya bai Dhasi conceived a baby after 18 years of her married life in answer to prayer.

Â Kindly pray for the protection of believers and God's servants in the State. Recently a man was killed on the road side and money was stolen from him in Shahgarh.

Â Kindly pray for the following sick people to be cured: Tulsa (Swelling of lungs); Jeya (Ascites); Manoj (Stomach disorder); Nibuva (Family problem); Rakesh and Phool Singh (Alcoholism).

Â Pray for the court case that is still going on against our associate missionary A. Soni on charges of conversion. Pray that the trial may be completed quickly so that he may be able to resume the ministry.

Â God used Mrs. & Mr. Malarselvan to speak in a Family Seminar in Jaipur on *How to bring up the children in the Lord*. It was a very useful time for the participants.

Â God blessed our Literature Ministry in Shahdol. Christians welcomed our missionary Mr. Mohanraj and purchased books worth Rs. 5,045/-.

Â Blessing Literature worth Rs. 26,500/- were sold in Bhilai during a Gospel Crusade. People are thirsty for God's Word. Mr. Rajadass, our State Coordinator, Chattisgarh was of great help.

Â God heard Kantabai's prayer and healed her daughter from fever. Praise God.

Â Our believer Mr. Sadhu Ram has collected around 20 children of his village and started teaching them everyday. May the Lord bless Sadhu Ram and the class that he conducts.

Â God has enabled us to start the first *Partners' Prayer Cell* in Sagar on the 10th of November. Bro. Paul David, our missionary from Banda came and shared the Field News and led the partners in prayer. One of our partners Mr. Sonu shared the Word of God and encouraged them to uphold the ministry through prayer.

## **MAHARASHTRA**

Â Datta Khude a new contact is suffering from paralysis and needs your prayers.

Â Giramalla kattimani of Jath has passed away, leaving his wife Sumitra and two small children behind him. Pray for the bereaved family.

Â We have been praying since long for Ashwini and Shekabai for children. God has heard our prayers. They are in the family way!

Â Our Missionary Shantgouda is recovering slowly from ligament damage of his leg. Praise the Lord!

Â Believers' retreat on 29 Oct 2006 was a blessing to our believers. 200 people attended.

Â Vaishali kamble of Murgud got a new job. She testifies that it is an answer to our prayers.

## **ORISSA**

Â Praise God for the people who watched the Gospel film in 18 villages.

Â Please pray for the following: Kami Sabar (Cerebral Malaria); Pania Sabar, Hadia Sabar (TB); Punny Sabar (Sores all over the body); Budhi Sabar (Anaemia); Prathashini (Childless), Shantimani (Safe delivery).

Â 26 Beggars participated in the Beggars' retreat conducted in Diptipur.

Â Seven people obeyed the Lord in Diptipur.

Â Cherka believers are under threat from anti-Christian forces.

Â 400 people participated in the dedication service of Cherka Church building. Mr. J. Santhakumar dedicated the building for the glory of God.

Â 30 members participated in a programme organized for Church Elders. All were blessed.

Â 23 people from Pipalpadar, Kharsohandi & Rangniguda villages obeyed the Lord.

Â Kindly pray for the following: Mrs. Kusum (Demon possession), Mrs. Raimathi Subarna (Childless).

## **RAJASTHAN**

Â Mrs. Leela Samuel underwent an operation to remove a tumour from her head. Please pray for her speedy recovery and for her husband Samuel to be healed from High Blood Pressure.

Â From Bedalipeda village our Lord added one new family Baddu & Dity to Bakaner Fellowship.

Â Pray that God may work a miracle for Sabita and her five sisters who are above 18 yrs but not attained puberty.

Ã By the grace of God 100 believers from Neemkathana, Srimadhapur and Singhana mission fields gathered in Khetri Nagar for two days to celebrate the *Festival of Joy*. The theme was *Revive us O Lord!* The believers were exhorted and encouraged through the Word of God and the singing ministry of our missionaries Mrs. & Mr. Elisha.

Ã In answer to prayers, our Lord healed our believer Mrs. Urmila's child Sagunthala from her death bed.

Ã Our Lord graciously enabled our Rajasthan missionaries and native workers to sit under His feet for 3 days (14-16 Nov 2006) with fasting and Prayer. Our Lord used mightily our missionary Robinsam to share the Word of God. It was a time of good fellowship and personal revival.

#### TAMILNADU

Ã Sakthivel of Malkapadi got delivered from witchcraft when he attended our worship service.

Ã Mary a student of the Sitteri Hills Hostel got healed from the swelling in her liver.

Ã Esther, Saroja, Lakshmi, Manjula, Manjamma and Chinthamani have been benefited through our night school.

Ã Mr. Selvaraj, a believer fell down from a Lorry and was saved by the grace of God without any injury.

Ã Kindly pray for the following: Lalliammal (Allergy); Padma (Neck pain for 15 years); Sumadhi (Chest pain); Mohan (Finance for heart surgery); Duraisamy (Land dispute), Mahendran (Swelling in his liver).

#### WEST BENGAL

Ã Mrs. Regina Chelliah shared God's Word in the CNI Church, Mahakalguri and sold Blessing Books worth Rs. 1500/- along with Mrs. Minu Iswarare in a local cultural programme. 30 persons became annual subscribers for Blessing Bengali Magazine.

Ã Our Missionaries from Assam and West Bengal gathered for three days fasting prayer cum planning meeting at Siliguri. Col. H. K. Ghissing, our State Representative and our Missionary N. K. Kusha shared the Word of God.

Ã Anushya Gladly (9 yrs) daughter of Mr. Antony underwent an eye operation successfully.

Ã Our Blessing Book *Apples of Gold* has been released in Bengali language. f

(Contn. page 9)

God's blessings. But he failed miserably. The one wise thing the woman did after eating the fruit was to make her husband partake of the sin. Otherwise the aftermath is beyond imagination.

God gave a special wisdom to Joseph above all the wise men of Egypt; but he refused to take the place of God (Gen 50:19).

In their bargain to become like God, they lost their innocence to gain the serpent's corrupt wisdom, who also corrupted his wisdom by pride. That's the earthly wisdom described by James (Gen 3:1; Isa 14:12-15; Eze 28:6; 12-17; Js 3:14-16). It is full of envy, self-seeking in heart, boasting and lying against the truth, earthly, sensual, demonic, leading to confusion and every evil thing. If we listen to the counsel of the serpents of the world, we will inherit the corrupt wisdom.

The situation is not much different today. Worldly wisdom is a bait the devil hangs in front of our nose. In the last days many will scramble for knowledge (Dan 12:4). The preacher says of worldly wisdom: I thought to myself, "Look, I have grown and increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me; I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge. Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom, and also madness and folly, but I learned that this too is a chasing after the wind. For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief (Eccl 1:16-18).

In our pursuit of wisdom, we can make lot of mistakes like Adam and Eve who ate the fruit to become wise like God and made fools of themselves. If they lacked wisdom and if they wanted it they need to have just asked their heavenly Father without doubting, and He would have given them liberally (Js 1:5-7). But they doubted His love and turned to the wrong direction.

God longs to bless us with His divine wisdom. Ask, and it shall be given to you. f

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<b>ZONAL FASTING PRAYER, BYM—TAMILNADU BRANCH</b>			
<b>Pray!</b>		<b>15 &amp; 16 January 2007</b>	<b>PARTICIPATE!</b>
<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Zone</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Contact</b>
1.	SOUTH	Rose Mary Hr. Sec. School Palayamkottai 627 002 (Near Palay Bus Stand)	Mr. D. Samraj, ZC 9443432633 Local Organiser: Mr. Benny 9443372691
2.	EAST	Ravindranath High School Dr. Ambetkar Road Avadi Nagar Pondicherry 605 004	Mr. E. L. Ephraim, ZC 9344011605 Local Organiser: Mr. Stanley M. Robert 0424-2353227, 9486114055
3.	CENTRAL	Blessing Centre LIC Nagar Madurai 625 010	Mr. D. M. Hastings, ZC 9443303886 Local Organiser: Mr. Arul Prasad, 9486162198
4.	NORTH	Bethel Hall 12/10 Mettukuppam Road Maduravoyal Tele. exchange Chennai 600 095	Mr. S.C. VedaSironmani, ZC 044-23744488 Local Organiser: Mr. Herbert 9443479802
5.	WEST	Graham Staines Mat. School Onapalayam Coimbatore 641 109	Mr. R. Balasundaram, ZC 0424-2272182 Local Organiser: Mr. R. Natarajan-9443372691

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Founder: R. Stanley, B.E., M.Tech.



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